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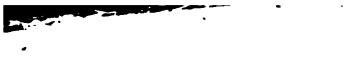

NAPOLEON AND ENGLAND

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR

L'ALLIANCE FRANCO-HOLLANDAISE CONTRE L'ANGLETERRE (1735-1788), d'après les documents inédits des archives du ministère des affaires étrangères. 8vo. 1902.

HISTOIRE DU PORTUGAL. 18mo. 1887.

HISTOIRE DE SERBIE. 18mo. 1893.

HISTOIRE DU MONTÉNÉGRO ET DE LA BOSNIE. 8vo. 1895.

LE ROYAUME DE SERBIE. 18mo. 1901.

LES PROJETS DE DESCENTE EN ANGLETERRE, de 1666 à 1782, d'après les documents inédits des archives du ministère des affaires étrangères. 1902.

NAPOLEON & ENGLAND

1803-1813

A STUDY FROM UNPRINTED DOCUMENTS

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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NOTE BY THE TRANSLATOR

THIS English version of *Napoléon et l'Angleterre*, having not only the advantage of an Introduction by Dr. Rose but also having undergone the careful supervision of the author, may be regarded as a new edition of the work. Alterations and improvements have been made in various passages, the most important being the insertion of the full text of Lord Lauderdale's instructions (pp. 102-107). An Appendix has also been added on the French Revolutionary Calendar, and an Index to the whole. All documents quoted in English have been copied from the English texts when such exist; in the translation of French texts every effort has been made to render the exact meaning of the originals.

I must thank Mr. James Eggar, B.A., Cantab., for the many valuable suggestions he has made while kindly reading the proofs.

G. D. K.

143313

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THIS book is addressed to all who are interested in the Napoleonic period.

It might appear that the last word has been spoken on the intercourse and differences of Napoleon with England. Yet there is one point which has not been fully elucidated—the history of the diplomatic relations between the Emperor and the British Cabinet, from the violation of the Peace of Amiens in 1803 to the first abdication in 1814. In point of fact, despite a state of incessant war, correspondence was continually passing between the two Cabinets, with a view to bringing about a reconciliation either by direct or indirect means.

The subject has had some few pages devoted to it by the chief historians of Napoleon, but it has been placed in the background, since in Napoleon's career all other interests are subordinate in importance to military history. Those who have written of St. Helena and the man Napoleon have barely alluded to it.

Nevertheless these diplomatic relations are of great interest, especially if they are considered in their entirety, for they discover a side of Napoleon's character

which is but little known. The way in which they were entered into and broken off, explains why any reconciliation between the two nations became impossible.

In volume vi (Part 2 chaps. iii and iv), of *l'Europe et la Révolution française*, which has just appeared, M. Albert Sorel throws all the blame of the violation of the Peace of Amiens in 1803 upon the English; A. Thiers, Armand Lefebre, Bignon, and other eminent historians have advanced this contention before M. Sorel, but with less ability.

The perusal of numerous hitherto neglected documents from the records of the Foreign Office in Paris and from the *Archives Nationales* will show whether this contention is in accordance with the facts of the case. These documents will enable us to assign without any hesitation the responsibility for the violation of the Peace of Amiens.

Holland was the real cause. By continuing his occupation of Flushing and Utrecht in contradiction of the formal engagements he had entered into, in the treaties of Lunéville and the Convention of the Hague, Bonaparte gave the English the right to retain Malta as an equivalent. In vain was a compromise proposed to him. He refused to evacuate Holland despite the lawful claims made by the British Cabinet, which was thus forced to recall Lord Whitworth.

We shall proceed to explain why the negotiations opened with a view to the establishment of peace in 1806, in 1808, and in 1810 were entirely unsuccessful.

No one disputes that Napoleon was an administrator of extraordinary ability and the most brilliant general of modern times. The publication of new and authentic State papers will enable us to judge of his capacity as a diplomatist; we shall see the methods of argument he employed, not with a nation which was under his power, like Austria or Prussia, nor yet with one which was charmed by his seductive and deceitful promises, as was Russia, but with a people who resisted him and wished to treat with him on equal terms.

Napoleon is a part of history, and we believe that we in no way detract from his glory if we show a just sense of proportion in estimating his actions.

It is the duty of the historian to express his opinion frankly, and this work is the outcome of our realization of this duty.

P. C.

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INTRODUCTION

TWO theories are held in France as to the causes of the rupture of the Peace of Amiens. In the former of these Napoleon is looked on as entirely immersed during the years 1801-1803 in beneficent schemes for securing the harmony of all classes in France and in founding anew the greatness of that nation by sagacious reforms at home and by the adoption of a spirited colonial policy. Great Britain, on the other hand, figures as the restless intriguing rival, jealous of the new prosperity of France, sheltering the French malcontents who sought to disturb the rule of the First Consul, and perfidiously clinging to Malta in defiance of treaty obligations. Up to the present this has been the view taken by nearly all French writers and therefore by the masses of their countrymen.

There is, however, another method of studying the cause of the Great War, infinitely less popular, but destined slowly though surely to win its way to acceptance. It does not appeal to popular prejudices or to parrot cries against "*la perfide Albion*"; it bases its conclusions on the evidence of documents. It invites historical students of both nations, and all who are desirous of reviewing the causes of the Great War, to weigh the evidence presented by the French and British ambassadors to their respective Governments, to follow

in their despatches the course of the diplomatic entanglement, and to mark the efforts of either side to unravel it without resorting to the sword. This method of study is not so superficially attractive as the former. The easier course naturally is to raise the cry of "*la perfide Albion*" and to pronounce all study of the question futile, seeing that England all along meant to have Malta. To those who rush at the question, *la tête baissée*, M. Coquelle does not appeal in the present work. He does, however, seek to provide information for all fair-minded persons on both sides of the Channel, as well as for those who wish to know the French Emperor as he really was, not an infallible demi-god, but a great man whose judgement was now and again warped by ambition and passion.

M. Coquelle's work gains in importance at the present time, seeing that M. Sorel has lately given the weight of his influence to the Anglophobe side, both in his *L'Europe et la Révolution française* (Part VI.), and in an article in the *Revue des deux Mondes* for 1st September, 1902. In the latter he has sought to revive the notion that the British Government needed war with France in order to avert the establishment at London of a Government like that of the First Consul. Had M. Sorel studied the letters of Fox and the diary of Romilly, penned after their visit to Paris in the summer of 1802, he would scarcely have supported so fantastic a notion. M. Coquelle cuts the ground from under all such theorizing by showing from the reports of General Andréossy, the French ambassador in London, that both George III. and the Addington Ministry were sincerely desirous of peace, and that ministers expressed satisfaction at the

re-establishment of the hereditary principle in France. Even when matters became gravely complicated owing to the French occupation of Holland and Switzerland, Andréossy again and again assured the First Consul that the British Government wished for peace. M. Coquelle here prints for the first time the private letters written by the ambassador to that effect. The sixth and seventh of these appeals to Napoleon, quoted by M. Coquelle in Chapter VII., are documents of great importance. Andréossy's subsequent conduct during his embassy at Vienna in 1808-1809 showed that he was far from being a partisan of peace at all costs. His report on the politics and armaments of the Hapsburg Court at that time largely confirmed Napoleon in his suspicious and hostile attitude to Austria, a fact which enhances the value of his testimony as to the pacific intentions of the British Government in 1803.

M. Coquelle is well known through his historical works and his contributions to Reviews. In harmony with the spirit prevailing in the French historical school, he keeps his narrative in close touch with documents and allows them to tell their own story.

Here and there, perhaps, he might have strengthened his argument, *e.g.*, by showing that the French Government during the negotiations at Amiens admitted in writing that the recent gains of France "peuvent autoriser une partie des demandes du Gouvernement Britannique"; and that the Addington Cabinet acted on this well-understood principle of compensation when it proffered the claims set forth in Chapter VIII. of this volume. Further, M. Coquelle, in his admirable remarks on the importance of Holland in the events that brought about the war, might have shown that

the protracted occupation of that land by French troops not only constituted a direct menace to the mouth of the Thames, but also endangered Britain's communications with India. As long as the Batavian, or Dutch, Republic lay under the yoke of the First Consul, the Cape of Good Hope, latterly restored to the Dutch, could at any time become the base of operations of French cruisers and privateers preying upon British East Indiamen. The independence of Holland was therefore a matter of more than European concern. It affected the most vital interests of the British Empire. First, however, among French historians, M. Coquelle has pointed out clearly that the question of peace or war in 1803 depended very largely on the observance by Bonaparte of the clause of the treaty of Lunéville (1801) guaranteeing the independence of the Batavian Republic.

Limits of space prevent any reference to M. Coquelle's account of the Anglo-French negotiations of the years 1806, 1807, and 1810. For the first time they are now described with the clearness of outline and authority of statement that comes from a study of the original documents. The narrative gains in interest from the fact that no British writer has yet dealt thoroughly with those episodes, in which Fox, Canning, and the Marquess Wellesley were closely concerned. The chief point of interest, however, lies in the material which M. Coquelle brings forward, serving to illustrate the strange perversity of the French Emperor; he is here shown to have let slip opportunity after opportunity that might have been used to consolidate his own fortunes and the supremacy of France in the affairs of Europe. For these reasons alone the volume

ought to appeal to a wide circle of readers in the English-speaking world.

I ought, perhaps, to mention that the foot-notes are those of M. Coquelle, except where otherwise specified.

It remains to add that M. Coquelle has kindly furnished his original transcripts from the despatches of the British Foreign Office for use in this volume. Historical students need not be reminded that the value of the original text transcends that of any translation, however carefully made.

J. H. R.

July, 1904.

PART I

THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE VIOLATION OF THE PEACE OF AMIENS

NAPOLEON AND ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

ARRIVAL OF GENERAL ANDRÉOSSY IN LONDON; HIS RECEPTION BY THE KING AND MINISTERS

WHEN General Andréossy was sent to England in November, 1802, as the representative of France, the relations between the two countries were no longer as cordial as on the day after the Peace of Amiens, which had been signed seven months previously. Since that time M. Otto[1] had been acting as plenipotentiary with all the greater zest, because he had himself for more than a year conducted the preliminary negotiations which led to our reconciliation with Great Britain.

When it was necessary to choose an absolute ambassador, the First Consul rightly thought that the personality of General Andréossy would have some weight with the English aristocracy.

[1] Otto, born in the Grand Duchy of Baden in 1754, was employed in the French foreign service before the Revolution. He was *chargé d'affaires* at Berlin in 1799, and went to London in September, 1800, to negotiate an exchange of prisoners. In April, 1801, Addington, the Prime Minister, entered into peace negotiations with him

Born of an old Italian family, Count Antoine-François Andréossy[1] entered the artillery at the age of twenty and soon became one of the most highly-valued officers of the pre-revolutionary government. Contrary to the expectation of his friends, who had reserved a place for him in Condé's army, he eagerly embraced the cause of the Revolution and served in a campaign with the army of the Rhine. Transferred into the Italian army, he became an intimate friend of Bonaparte, followed him to Egypt, and won distinction as much by his knowledge of hydrography as by his military attainments. Returning with him, he was of great assistance in the Revolution of the 18th Brumaire,[2] and received the rank of major-general with the command of Strasbourg, an appointment he was holding when he was nominated ambassador to London.

Besides having given pledges to the Republic for his fidelity and being a friend of the First Consul, Andréossy had in addition the inestimable advantage of being Count Andréossy to the English aristocracy, in other words, their equal, according to their conception of social hierarchy.

In every way the choice of the General was calculated decidedly to further the friendship of England and France.

"The news of his approaching arrival causes the greatest satisfaction here. The Cabinet at once despatched a messenger to Lord Whitworth[3] to notify

[1] Born at Castelnaudary, 6th March, 1761.
[2] [*I.e.* 9th November, 1799, *v.* Appendix.—TR.]
[3] Ambassador-designate for Paris.

him of the appointment and to bid him hold himself in readiness to leave for France. I have received the most peaceful assurances from the Cabinet who mark with the greatest satisfaction anything which is likely to strengthen the control of the First Consul in home affairs, and would even wish to see his family secure the hereditary tenure of his office, a wish that is very generally felt in this country; but anything that tends to the *external* aggrandizement of this power must necessarily claim the attention of the British minister."[1]

The attitude of the English towards the re-establishment of an hereditary monarchy in favour of the Bonapartes was thus openly expressed to the French representative by their first minister. They wished the First Consul to be as great as possible in his own country but not beyond its frontiers.[2]

The whole English policy of the period is summed up in these few words. Now Bonaparte wished at once to be great in France and to dominate the neighbouring countries.

His nomination as President of the Italian Republic on the 25th of January, 1802, at Lyons, and the actual occupation of a large part of Italy which followed, almost led to the failure of the negotiations for the Peace of Amiens, which were then in progress. Yet the English did not wish for a rupture at the last moment, and reserved for later negotiations between the two Cabinets the question of the compensation to

[1] Foreign Office records, Paris, MSS. England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 70. Otto, plenipotentiary of France in London, to Talleyrand (29th October, 1802).

[2] Cf. Armand Lefebvre, *Histoire des Cabinets de l'Europe de 1800 à 1815*, vol. i., p. 277.

be made by France in return for the Italian and Ligurian Republics, the question of the recognition of the kingdom of Etruria, and of the amount of the indemnity that was to be paid in Italy to the dispossessed King of Piedmont.

Six months later, by the senatorial decree of the 11th of September, 1802, the First Consul simply annexed Piedmont and the Island of Elba to France, and made them into six departments. The Swiss affair and the occupation of the country by General Ney were the next indications clearly given by Bonaparte of his intention to exceed the frontiers that had been laid down for him in the peaces of Amiens and Lunéville. Finally the non-evacuation by our troops of Flushing and Utrecht justified the fears of the English, as it did their desire to enter into new negotiations on all these points.

Andréossy reached Dover on the 3rd of November, 1802, at six o'clock in the evening, after a twelve-hours' crossing, and set out early the next day for London.

Owing to the bad roads, and to accidents that befell his carriage, he did not arrive till an hour after midnight. All the way he was struck with the deep interest that was taken in the advent of the representative of the French Government.

Immediately on reaching London Andréossy visited Lord Hawkesbury, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who returned his visit the same day and remained nearly an hour and a half closeted with the new ambassador. Amongst other news, he informed him that Lord Whitworth was on his way to Paris. The General's presentation to the King was

fixed for the following week,[1] and is thus described by the ambassador:

"My presentation took place the day before yesterday. According to custom, the Master of the Ceremonies called for me at my house; I took him in my carriage and we went together to Saint James's palace. I remained in the first drawing-room during the levee, which lasted a very long time because of the numbers that had been attracted by my audience with the King. Even the princes of the blood had come from the country, and, while I was waiting, many people came up to be presented to me. Lord Hawkesbury introduced me to his Majesty; on approaching the King, who was standing alone in the midst of his Cabinet, I made the following speech."

[We forbear to quote it here, as it has the commonplace character of all speeches delivered on similar occasions.]

"The King replied to me:

"'I have always wished for peace and do so still, and I shall remain of the same mind, as long as no attack is made on the dignity of my crown and the interests of my people. Have you always been an officer?'

"'Sire, for the last twenty years, I have served in the Artillery.'

"'You are an Engineer, are you not?'

"'In France the duties of the Engineer and Artillery officers are distinct.'

"'You are an Engineer. We know that you are qualified for either service, . . . and are a man of letters.'[2]

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 79. Andréossy to Talleyrand, 5th November, 1802.

[2] By this time Andréossy had already published his *Histoire*

"'Sire, I have never laid claim to the title, but it has always been a pleasure to me to devote my leisure to study.'

"'A literary life must entail many pleasures, and besides, makes a man independent.'

"I was struck by this last reflection. The rest of our conversation, which lasted a few minutes more, only turned on matters regarding my journey, the English climate, etc., etc. I have since learnt by a quasi-official communication that the King was well pleased. The Master of the Ceremonies went back with me to the court-yard. I passed amidst lines of spectators, who showed the greatest enthusiasm, and I had difficulty in making my way through a large crowd to get back to my carriage and to leave the palace. There was general applause which followed me to the top of St. James's Street. The same enthusiasm and applause greeted me at the door of my house. Yesterday the Queen received me before the levee as is her custom. I was introduced by her Grand Chamberlain. The Queen was standing in the middle of her room, with the princesses of the blood arranged in a semicircle behind her. After the customary compliments she put several kind and gracious questions to me about my journey and my stay in England. Misled by the sound of my name, she thought I was Italian and I had to give her some explanations."

During his stay in London, Andréossy addressed seven confidential letters to Bonaparte, his old companion-in-arms in Italy. They have not hitherto been

du canal du midi (1800), a classical work on the subject. He had also written numerous memoirs subsequently to his sojourn in Egypt, concerning the regulation of the water supply of the country. In later years, when ambassador at Constantinople, he continued his writings, and became a member of the *Académie des Sciences* in 1826.

published, though their interest is considerable, for they throw an unexpected light on the violation of the Peace of Amiens. Here is the first, which we think should be quoted in its entirety:[1]

"London, 11th Nivôse, Year XI.
(Jan. 1, 1803).

"TO THE CITIZEN, FIRST CONSUL,

"I have been on very intimate terms with the Prince of Wales and have had to submit to a six hours' interview at dinner with him. Sheridan was one of us, and was very ready to make excuses for the personal abuse he had allowed himself in his speech in the House of Commons, and I have reason to believe that the interview was arranged for the purpose. Sheridan does not speak French, and I understand very little English; the Prince of Wales served as interpreter, and supported and enlarged on Sheridan's chief points. These are his own words, repeated time and again as the bottles went round, as is the custom of the country. I had no difficulty in remembering them. 'Sheridan,' said the Prince, 'was forced to speak strongly against the First Consul in order that he might be able in the end to keep peace. It was only possible to attain that object by supporting the proposals made by the ministers in favour of an efficient army and navy. If Bonaparte was only an ordinary man, he would not excite our fears and our jealousy, but in treating with a man who has such talents and so great an ascendency of genius, we must not rest secure with an ordinary armament. Under the Monarchy, the Government used to take its tone from the nation, but to-day it is the First Consul who forces his country to energetic action. Our greatest cause for alarm lies in the fact that

[1] These seven letters are in the *Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1672.

Bonaparte is still greater as a politician than as a warrior. I desire peace and have used every means within my power to secure a peaceful decision from the Government; but I should be unworthy of my country, if I should consent to make it keep peace at the price of dishonourable sacrifices, and in those circumstances I should be the first to rouse it to war.'

"Sheridan was unwilling for us to have the left bank of the Rhine, for he said we could then send troops down the river to make an attack on England; the prince laughed at him:

"'You must know, Sheridan is not a man; he is the most extraordinary creature alive; with all his vices he is endowed with the rarest talents.'

"After making himself very charming, Sheridan told me how delighted he was at the good fortune that had enabled him to get to know me personally, and added:

"'When we meet, in the future, we shall know just where we stand.'

"The prince seems to have formed a high estimate of the talents of Pichegru, and a very poor one of Moreau's character; he told me that what had struck him most about France was Moreau's retreat in the Black Forest and Masséna's defence of Genoa; he maintains that he has not seen Pichegru since his return from Cayenne. I must notice that the success of the English in Egypt seems to make them wish to pose as a military power.

"According to the reports I have received, the *émigrés* seem to be losing all hope; since my arrival I have encouraged this idea by sound reasoning and am sure that the person I see does not fail to pass it on to the right quarter. A tentative proposal, made to me during the last few days, has shown me that the propositions of the Government, which were, I believe, formerly rejected with scorn, would now be enthusiastically received. I have pretended to pay no attention to this

semi-confidence. You must expect that intriguers and irreconcilables will continue their agitations. I am warning the Minister of Foreign Affairs of a revelation made to me a few moments ago. A traveller of my acquaintance, who was coming to London, was, about a month since, witness to a scandalous scene in an inn at Calais. A man of the name of David, Grand-vicar of the Bishop of Limoges, was on his way to this country on a mission of which he spoke openly. He declaimed with violence, and honoured me so far as to treat me as the usurper of the rights of a well-known family, to contribute to the glory of carrying through some useful work, a glory which he certainly does not possess. This David appears to be a learned man, talented and resolute.

"I am, etc.,

"F. ANDRÉOSSY."

His reception by the princes of the blood and by the ministers was marked by the same cordiality as his reception by the Prince of Wales, and if the General did not provoke the noisy manifestations of joy that accompanied Lauriston's arrival in the preceding year,[1] the attentions with which he was received augured well for the future. Addington affected to look on him as a personal friend, and his doors were open to him at any hour of the evening.[2]

[1] When he came to London to ratify the preliminaries of the peace, the people unharnessed his horses and dragged his carriage through the streets.

[2] An extract from the second confidential letter of 26th January, 1803, from Andréossy to Bonaparte. It contains some details on the relations between Pitt and Addington, who were good friends despite their political disagreement; on the attachment of Fox for the Prince of Wales, and on the obstinacy of George III.; and finally bears witness to the peaceful behaviour of the *émigrés*.

Andréossy is discriminating in his observations on the various members of the Court and the Administration; his most curious judgment is that which he passes on George III.:

"The King has the full use of his intellect, though his state of health is precarious. He is the most autocratically inclined of all European monarchs."

On another occasion he represents him as the most obstinate man in the world.

CHAPTER III

DIPLOMATIC FENCING

ON the occasion of the 1st of January, 1803, it is probable that General Andréossy was present at numerous social functions, yet he makes no mention of them in his despatches; it is also likely that he gave a reception to the Court and to the town. His annual salary of 240,000 francs and the allowance of 120,000 francs for inaugural expenses enabled him to entertain magnificently.[1] It would have been most interesting to have had some details as to his social life and relations with the British aristocracy.

Despite the importance of the questions awaiting decision, there was a feeling of relief in England, and the year opened under sufficiently happy auspices, when an unfortunate sally of the First Consul began the series of petty aggravations which led to the final rupture.

On January the 25th, 1803, Andréossy writes:

"The attitude of the French government has curiously affected England and her ministers; they

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, supplement, vol. xxxi. fol. 238. Talleyrand to Andréossy, 28th June, 1802. This salary ran from the close of May, the date of the General's nomination as ambassador to London, though he only took up his office on the 4th of November following.

find they are over-reached, and do not know what policy to adopt. They cannot endure that the First Consul should have declared before all Europe that the English have no longer any allies on the Continent. Lord Hawkesbury remarked to me sadly: 'Even if it were his opinion, it should not have been put into words.'"

When Bonaparte was receiving the delegates from the Swiss cantons during the last few days of January, he had announced to them that the affairs of the Confederation did not concern England, and had added that even if, subsequent to the late insurrection, the ministers at St. James's had made some representations concerning the matter, France was simply going to annex Switzerland. Though a mere piece of bravado, it was unpardonable from the ruler of a country, who was speaking officially to the delegates of a friendly power. All Europe was amazed; pessimists in England saw the realization of their fears in the near future. Pitt was triumphant, and as Andréossy jocosely wrote:

"From the appearance of the ministers it might be the last judgment day, and it will possibly be the day of judgment for them."

The ambassador did his utmost to minimize the grievances of the two Cabinets. In the first place, he had never himself seen pre-revolutionary decorations worn; he had heard that they were only worn by the sons of the Duke of Orléans; Peltier, the famous pamphleteer, whom the First Consul was pursuing with his resentment, had been reduced to impotence, and the publishing business which he had undertaken was absorbing his whole attention. After a trial, which

had aroused the greatest interest, he had been found guilty by an English jury of having tried to incite the French people to assassinate Bonaparte.[1] It was an extraordinary result in view of the existing English institutions. Andréossy goes on to explain that the subsidies granted to certain *émigrés* by the English Government were the rewards for services rendered in the course of the late war. He drew Bonaparte's attention to the good impression produced in England by the courteous reception accorded to Lord Whitworth and his wife, the Duchess of Dorset, in Paris. At the same time he tried to exercise his personal influence with the newspapers that were hostile to France, but with no result; then he decided, much against his will, to make representations to Lord Hawkesbury, who replied to him: "Papers that are bought by the *émigrés* are powerless to affect the greatness of France; do as I do, despise them."

It was a grand and statesmanlike ideal, but the First Consul was not great enough to appreciate it. He attached such importance to the clamourings of a few English journalists that, five months previously, he had laid an embargo on the importation into France of all British papers, with one exception, and had refused to tolerate them in the reading-rooms and coffee-houses.[2]

As a proof of their good intentions, the English Cabinet had the forgers of French banknotes arrested —a notable concession, for the English law only authorized the punishment of forgers of Bank of

[1] *The Trial of John Peltier*. London, 1803.

[2] Napoleon's Correspondence, 6246. Letters to Fouché, 13th August, 1802.

England as opposed to foreign notes.[1] Bonaparte attached no importance to this incident, though it was indicative of England's conciliatory attitude.

It has been said that Andréossy was too favourably inclined towards the *émigrés*. A noble himself, and a friend of Pichegru, he had kept in touch with his old comrades who lived in London. Even if there were truth in the suggestion, so far from his attitude being prejudicial, it was of great advantage to the Republic, for this state of affairs enabled Andréossy to avoid friction, and to further friendly relations between France and England; it was precisely the reason that had influenced Bonaparte in making the appointment. But if a very natural bias inclined the ambassador to the side of the old nobility, he had the greatness of France at heart; the private letters that he wrote from London to the First Consul, which we quote below, afford ample evidence of this fact.

The English Cabinet were no less exercised about the weighty affairs of Malta and Egypt than about certain details of purely economic character, as, for example, the matter of commercial agents. The First Consul had decided to send French agents to the large English centres. They were to favour the resumption of commercial relations, and above all to notify him of the economic and naval state of the country. Now the English Cabinet refused to authorize these agents to proceed to their posts in an official capacity, because we had no treaty of commerce with England; the First Consul, appealing to pre-revolutionary precedents, held to his decision.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 150. Andréossy to Talleyrand, 12th January, 1803.

Lord Hawkesbury stood firm, and all our agents, who had assembled in London, waited in vain; Bonaparte instructed them to proceed to their several posts as private travellers, even though they should be subjected to all sorts of vexations.[1] His resolution produced a bad effect, but there was yet another matter, in itself of quite secondary importance, which, however, entailed most momentous consequences.

The English Post Office intercepted a letter sent by order of the First Consul to Marès, our commercial representative at Hull. It contained a question relating to ordinary trade matters, but there was a request for a detailed plan of Hull harbour, and elaborate information as to its approaches. Hawkesbury was much impressed by this discovery, and read into it an intention of Bonaparte to make a descent on England in time of peace. He sent for Andréossy, showed him a copy of the questions put, and complained bitterly of the unfriendly proceeding. Yet he notified him that he would ask no explanation from the French Government.[2]

These questions were part of the secret service investigations that Bonaparte had ordered Decrès to make about the English coast, from the mouth of the Thames to Plymouth, and about the Scottish coast.[3] The English Cabinet, placed on their guard, soon made this discovery, and were proportionately alarmed.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600. Talleyrand to Andréossy, 23rd December, 1802.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 129.

[3] Correspondence, 6475. Decrès' orders, 4th December, 1802.

CHAPTER IV

SÉBASTIANI'S REPORT

THE publication, in the *Moniteur* of the 30th of January, of Colonel Sébastiani's report on his voyage in Egypt came as a very great shock to the Addington Ministry.[1]

Lord Hervey hurried off to Andréossy and spoke to him of his uneasiness about the bad impression which the publication of Sébastiani's report could not fail to produce in England, where the *Moniteur* was universally regarded as the official journal of the French Republic.

The ambassador replied, that since Lord Hervey was addressing him confidentially he would do the same.

"I am not surprised," he added, "that the French Government should make use of every means to point out clearly the conduct of England as regards the execution of certain of the articles signed at Amiens. To go back officially on matters such as the evacuation of Malta and Alexandria is to call into question the Treaty of Amiens. Thus, in the reserved attitude adopted by the First Consul, England should only

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 166. Andréossy to Talleyrand, 8th February, 1803.

discover a signal mark of his sincere desire to preserve peace."

Lord Hervey waived the question of Alexandria and returned to the subject of Malta, saying that the intentions of Russia relative to the guaranteed independence of Malta were not yet formally known, and that a messenger had just been sent to St. Petersburg.[1]

"You see," replied the ambassador, "that in the report reference is only made to Alexandria, which should have been evacuated long ago, and which England has on several occasions declared she was on the point of evacuating."

Lord Hervey then referred to several rather uncomplimentary remarks about General Stuart which were in Colonel Sébastiani's report.

"You are very sensitive; and yet every day the London papers are filled with disgraceful calumnies, repugnant alike to decency and good taste. What construction then do you wish us to put on your attitude?"

"The French papers may say what they please," said the Englishman, "but it is a different matter when it is the *Moniteur*, the official organ."

Andréossy supplied Lord Hervey with the explanations published by the French Government on the supposed inspiration of the articles inserted in the *Moniteur*; his representations, however, could not induce him to change his opinion. For Lord Hervey, as for

[1] We may note that Russia, Prussia and Austria were to guarantee the new state of affairs in Malta. Austria alone had consented, Prussia had not yet replied, and Russia had refused once, but it was hoped that she would change her decision.

all others, both in France and abroad, the *Moniteur* was the mouthpiece of the First Consul.

Bonaparte knew so well the great and disastrous effect which the publication of Sébastiani's report would produce in England, that as early as the 5th of February he had the following letter sent to his ambassador:

"You will have seen in the *Moniteur* the report made by Colonel Sébastiani of his travel in the Levant; and very probably the English Ministry will not have failed to display indignation at the observations made by this officer in his examination of the military forces, and to cavil at his observation that six thousand French soldiers would suffice to conquer Egypt. You will have had no difficulty in answering the Ministry, and you should have done so in a forcible and spirited manner. A French officer sent to re-establish the normal trade relations between France and Egypt could not but have been astonished to see that the English army had not yet evacuated the country.

"Unaccustomed to politics, the officer must have looked on so manifest a violation of such a solemn treaty as a commencement of hostilities, and hence his mind would naturally turn to military calculations and the chances a war might offer; for the retention of Egypt and Malta, despite the stipulations of the treaty of Amiens, is an act that provokes the renewal of war."

The publication of this report was in itself culpable. As if to increase its effect, Talleyrand, on the 5th of February, acting under Bonaparte's orders, had a conference with Whitworth and showed him the copy of his letter to Andréossy, which we have just quoted.

It would have been better policy not to have informed him of it. The English ambassador, in reply, assured him that orders had been sent some time previously for the evacuation of Egypt.[1] As usual, Bonaparte was incredulous, and yet Whitworth was speaking the truth; the Addington Ministry was abandoning Alexandria, and so the only result of Sébastiani's report was to annoy the English to no purpose.[2]

Yet they soon recovered; on the 15th of February Andréossy writes: "Colonel Sébastiani's report is almost forgotten; but it has left traces behind it. The funds have fallen." In order to remove this bad impression, General Andréossy had a long interview with Lord Hawkesbury, and remarked: "Without a very considerable navy we could have no designs on Egypt; the business of St. Domingo is quite sufficient for us, and besides, when such designs are conceived, care is taken not to divulge them."

Even if the English Cabinet had thought of evacuating Malta, despite the occupation of Holland by our troops and the annexation of Piedmont, the kind of pressure which Bonaparte had wished to bring to bear on them in the matter of Egypt, would have prevented them from doing so because of public opinion.

The process of intimidation which the First Consul was trying to employ against England, was the gravest insult that he could give to a nation whose excessive pride is one of its greatest faults. We shall see later that he never gave up this method. Lord Hawkes-

[1] F. O. R., England, supplement, vol. xxxii., fol. 17.

[2] A. Thiers, *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, vol. iv., p. 292 *sqq.*, does not mention this interview between Talleyrand and Whitworth on 3rd February, 1803.

bury mentioned this to Andréossy, in whose opinion the publication of Sébastiani's report was a most deplorable error. On being pressed to declare himself on the Maltese question the minister at last gave an explicit answer: "That the position of Europe, and especially of France, was then no longer the same as it had been at the treaty of Amiens, that the *status quo* at the time of the treaty, on which the stipulated compensation was to be calculated, had been disturbed by the extension of French territory, and left too great a discrepancy between the conditions on which the discussion had been based, and the results of the discussion as stated in the treaty."

Lord Hawkesbury's confused rigmarole can be briefly stated thus: "Since the treaty of Amiens, France has annexed Piedmont, and has failed to evacuate Holland, despite the treaty of Lunéville and the Convention of the 29th of August, 1801, so we are keeping Malta as an equivalent, which is only just."[1]

Andréossy, being unable to dispute these important French acquisitions, then pointed out that the French Government had in vain requested the English Cabinet to recognize the Ligurian and Italian Republics, and that as for Piedmont, there was no clause of the treaty that required its evacuation by our troops. Of Holland he said nothing. To support the weakness of his argument, the ambassador returned to the evacuation of Malta, but Lord Hawkesbury would give no explicit reply, and there the matter ended.

When advising Talleyrand of this interview on the 15th of February, Andréossy asked for instructions

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 173.

about Malta, for there was a vague report about Russian arbitration, which would have placed the matter in quite a different light, and he added, "The ministers in power cannot wish for war; 'the mere sight of them,' as one of their opponents has remarked, 'shows that they are far from wanting war.'"

This letter made Bonaparte decide to meet the English ambassador in person on the evening of the 18th of February. To the violent reproaches addressed to him by the First Consul concerning the non-evacuation of Malta by the English, and the secret dealings with the *émigrés*, Lord Whitworth replied by mentioning the annexation of Switzerland and Piedmont, and the non-evacuation of Holland. Bonaparte treated the occupation of Piedmont and Switzerland as mere trifles, and used expressions, according to Lord Whitworth, too trivial and vulgar to be quoted in a despatch, or to be heard anywhere save on the lips of a cab-driver. Bonaparte avoided giving any reply about Holland, but uttered terrible threats against England, and busied himself in his preparations for making a descent on that country.[1]

Lord Whitworth, very much affected by the words of the First Consul, asked that Andréossy should be at once advised of this conference, to insure the

[1] Oscar Browning, *England and Napoleon in* 1803, p. 82, despatch of Lord Whitworth to Lord Hawkesbury, 21st February, 1803. Cf. J. R. Seeley, *A Short History of Napoleon*, p. 288 *sqq*. A. Thiers, *op. cit.*, vol. iv., p. 300 *sqq*., gives a slightly different version of this interview. Alison, *History of Europe*, p. 179 *sqq*., points out the importance of the Dutch question. Cf. Walter Scott, *Life of Napoleon*, vol. v., p. 21, and J. H. Rose, *The Life of Napoleon I.*, vol. i., p. 401 *sqq*.

correspondence of the communications made by the General to the British Cabinet.

The next day, the 19th of February, Talleyrand notified the General of the whole business, and added, "consequently, without presenting a written note, you will make explicit requests:

"(1) That Alexandria and Malta be evacuated. [Bonaparte still affected to believe that Whitworth had lied to him, when he assured him on two separate occasions that there were no English in Alexandria; this persistence was calculated to estrange Addington without serving any useful purpose.]

"(2) That Georges Cadoudal and his confederates be expelled from British territory.

"(3) That the English Press be prevented from attacking France and the First Consul by the publication of outrageous libels, repugnant to public decency, the right of nations, and the state of peace.

"In view of the fact that on Tuesday next the position of the Republic is to be stated to the Legislative Body, it is important that you should have your interview at once, in order that it may precede the publication of this statement.

"Be careful to emphasize how inconsistent with the honour of the English people is the refusal to execute the treaty of Amiens."[1]

Thus, so far was Bonaparte from consenting to enter into the discussion proposed by Lord Addington, about the acquisition of Piedmont and the preservation of Holland by France in exchange for the occupation of Malta, that he sent a sort of ultimatum, in which he increased his demands. Can we believe that he did not know that it was impossible for a free and powerful

[1] F. O. R., England, supplement, vol. xxxii., fol. 17.

nation, and, above all, for one under Parliamentary rule, to accept the last two conditions referring to Georges Cadoudal and to the Press, without being eternally disgraced? Moreover, a second despatch of the same date, the 19th of February, even bade Andréossy lay stress on the precedent of 1749,[1] and ask that the Bourbons should be expelled from England and sent to Poland.

We have already mentioned how powerless the *émigrés*, the Press, and the Comte d'Artois were to interfere with the aggrandizement of Bonaparte. Such requests seemed designed merely to exasperate the war party in England, to weaken the peacefully disposed Cabinet, and to bring about a rupture.

These two important despatches only reached London on the 22nd of February at six o'clock in the evening, though, like all the correspondence, they were taken by French couriers, a method that did away with the use of a cipher, and accelerated communication.

At two o'clock on the 23rd Lord Hawkesbury received the ambassador; he was much grieved at hearing Bonaparte's requests, and declared "that England, by refusing to evacuate Malta, had hoped that general explanations could have been made and compensation discussed on the basis of the changed *status quo*."

In the other matters, as Andréossy was bound to expect, he only got vague replies, and the excuse that

[1] F. O. R., England, supplement, vol. xxxii., fol. 20. By the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle Louis XV. bound himself to banish the pretender Charles Stuart from France and executed his agreement.

a popular government was bound to pay deference to the voice of public opinion.[1]

As regards Malta, Lord Hawkesbury pointed out that the island was being made to play a far more important part than its real value warranted, but that the country attached great importance to it, and that this opinion had to be deferred to, or at any rate not too openly opposed.

About this time Decaen set out for India at the head of a small squadron. It might well have been considered as a pledge of peace, for if Bonaparte had had any idea of a war in the near future, he would not have exposed the expedition to the risk of falling into the power of the English squadrons. Yet the instructions given to Decaen showed that Napoleon was convinced that war must come, we might almost say that he wished to see hostilities reopen after a fairly long interval of time. Decaen was to get into touch with the princes who were uneasy under the English yoke, to indicate what forces would be necessary to drive the English out of India, but to act with tact, dissimulation, and prudence.

[1] F. O. R., England, vol. 500, fol. 186. Andréossy to Talleyrand, 24th February, 1803.

CHAPTER V

THE ENGLISH PROPOSALS OF 1ST MARCH, 1803, AND THE SCENE IN THE TUILERIES

AT this juncture Russia entered on the scene. Informed by Simon Worontzoff, his minister at London, of the grave difficulties that were separating the two countries, the Czar wished to prevent a conflict and offered to intervene. Markoff, the representative at Paris, who was very much disliked by Bonaparte, made some remarks on the nature of the relations existing between the two countries, and criticised them on the ground that they were not those which should exist between States that were at peace. But the First Consul hardly listened to him, assured him of his peaceful intentions, and a few days later, on the 21st of February, presented the Legislature with the famous statement dealing with the position of the Republic, which practically amounted to a declaration of war against England.

"The Government guarantees to the nation peace on the continent, and it may entertain hopes for the maintenance of peace on the high seas. The Government will make every effort to preserve it, compatible with the national honour, which is bound to maintain the literal execution of treaties."

That was already a rather unfair attack on the British Cabinet, which was thus made out to be proposing to France a course of action that was incompatible with honour.

"Now, in England two parties are disputing the power. One has concluded peace and seems decided to maintain it; the other has taken an oath of implacable hatred against France. This is the reason of the fickleness in their votes and their plans, and of their attitude that is at once peaceful and threatening. As long as this strife of parties lasts, there are measures that must necessarily be adopted by the Government of the Republic. Five hundred thousand men must be in arms ready to defend their country and to avenge her. It is a strange necessity imposed by wretched passions on two nations, who are both bound to peace, alike by interest and by inclination."

But further on the speech loses all restraint.

"However successful diplomacy may be in London, it will not entice other peoples to form new leagues, and the Government states with just pride, that England to-day cannot strive alone against France."

These words wounded British pride deeply; they swelled the ranks of the opposition and distressed the ministers, who did not hide their chagrin from Andréossy.

"Why," they said, "should we be gratuitously insulted in the course of a diplomatic discussion? Is that the way to hasten its solution? We are at issue on the question of Malta, Piedmont and Holland; let us try to come to an understanding. Why should you concern yourselves with the party strife of the British Parliament and say that it forces France to keep five

hundred thousand men under arms? And why declare to all the world that 'However successful diplomacy may be in London, it will not entice other peoples to form new leagues, and the Government states, with just pride, that England to-day cannot strive alone against France'?"

The ambassador refused to allow that the First Consul had any sinister intentions, and, by reopening the question of Malta, learnt that the English wished to keep a garrison there for six or seven years as a compensation for the territorial extension of France which had been effected since the signing of the peace of Amiens.

The English Cabinet *is peacefully inclined.* Andréossy repeated it for the third time, and was to repeat it again, for he was very well informed; in the anxiety which the Maltese question caused Lord Hawkesbury, and in the efforts that he wished to make to bring about a complete reconciliation, one cannot but see that the British Cabinet sincerely desired to escape from a difficult position and to avoid any rupture with France.[1]

At last we were met with a definite proposal which was clearly stated and which gave an opening for a genuine discussion, for the English were offering a concession in suggesting a time limit for their occupation of Malta; and looking at the matter dispassionately we must admit that it was not unreasonable, considering the annexation of Piedmont by France and the ill-defined occupation of Holland.

As if he were afraid that the questions might be

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 193. Andréossy to Talleyrand, 1st March, 1803.

settled, Bonaparte, on receipt of these proposals, ordered the ambassador to present the following note:

"By the terms of Paragraph 4, Article 10, in the treaty of Amiens, the English troops were to evacuate Malta and its dependencies three months after the exchange of the ratifications of the treaty. It is six months since the ratifications of the treaty were exchanged and the English troops are still at Malta.

"On the other hand, the French troops, which were to evacuate the states of Naples and Rome, did not wait for the expiration of the three months which were allowed for their withdrawal, and have even left Tarentum, whose fortifications they had rebuilt and in which they had collected a hundred pieces of cannon.

"What can be alleged to justify the delay in the evacuation of Malta? Did not Article 10 provide for all contingencies? Seeing that the Neapolitan troops have arrived, on what pretext have the English troops remained on the island?"

The following paragraph deals with the guarantee of the Great Powers provided for by Article 6, and which Russia had not yet sent:

"It would therefore seem impossible, and it would be unparalleled in the history of nations, for his Britannic Majesty to refuse to execute a fundamental article of the peace, in fact, the article which, at the time of the peace was considered the first in importance, and the one to be settled before any other. So the First Consul, who likes to trust the intentions of his British Majesty, and who is unwilling to believe that they are less frank and less loyal than are those by which he is himself animated, has hitherto wished to attribute the delay in the evacuation of Malta entirely to considerations of naval policy.

"The undersigned is therefore bidden to ask for an explanation of this matter." [1]

In view of the character of this note, Andréossy did not immediately forward it to the British Cabinet, but took upon himself to watch the turn of events.

It could not have been expected at Paris that the insult contained in the First Consul's statement of the 21st of February should remain unanswered; if no reply had been sent the Cabinet would have fallen at once. On the 8th of March Hawkesbury summoned Andréossy at 9 o'clock in the evening and informed him of the royal message which was to be read some few hours later. The reply, which struck Andréossy as being in bad taste and ridiculous, was but a paraphrase of the "five hundred thousand men," to whom Bonaparte had alluded in his statement.

"His Majesty," said George III., "thinks it necessary to acquaint the House of Commons, that as very considerable military preparations are being carried on in parts of France and Holland, he has judged it expedient to adopt additional measures of precaution for the security of his dominions; though the preparations to which his Majesty refers are avowedly directed to colonial service, yet, as discussions of great moment are now pending between his Majesty and the French Government, the result of which must at present be uncertain, his Majesty is induced to make this communication to his faithful Commons," etc., etc.

There was evidently manifest exaggeration in the mention of our preparations which had only in view

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fols. 189 and 200. Talleyrand to Andréossy, 4th March, 1803.

Decaen's unimportant expedition, and another for St. Domingo and for Louisiana;[1] but Bonaparte reserved for himself the monopoly of inter-Cabinet provocation, and would not allow the same tone to be adopted by other Powers. What would he have said if George III. had, on the occasion of Sébastiani's report, of the questions addressed to Marès, or of the political statement of the 24th of February, made a scene like that which he made on the 11th of March with the English ambassador in the court of the Tuileries?

It was the morning on which he received the terms of the royal message of the 8th, and he upbraided Lord Whitworth in presence of the whole diplomatic corps.

"'So you are determined to go to war.' 'No, Premier Consul,' I replied, 'we are too sensible of the advantages of peace. We have already been at war for the last fifteen years.' As he seemed to wait for an answer, I observed only, 'War has already lasted longer than it should have done.' 'But,' he replied, 'you want to make war for fifteen years more and you are forcing me into it.' I told him that that was very far from his Majesty's intentions.

"He then proceeded to Count Markoff and the Chevalier Azzara, who were standing together at a little distance from me and said to them: 'The English want to make war, but if they are the first to draw the sword, I shall be the last to replace it in its sheath. They refuse to respect treaties. In the future they will have to be covered with black crêpe.' I suppose he referred to the treaties. He then went his

[1] A few days later Bonaparte ceded Louisiana to the United States for some three millions sterling.

round, and was thought by all those to whom he addressed himself to betray great signs of irritation. In a few minutes he came back to me, to my great annoyance, and resumed the conversation, if such it can be called, by something personally civil to me. He then resumed: 'What is the meaning of these armaments? Against whom are you taking all these precautions? I have not a single man-of-war in the French ports, but if you wish to arm, I shall arm too; if you wish to fight, I shall fight too. You may succeed in annihilating France, you shall never intimidate her.' 'We wish to do neither,' said I, 'we should like to live on good terms with her.' 'You should then respect your treaties,' said he; 'may evil befall those who fail to respect their treaties! they are responsible to all Europe.'

"He was too agitated to make it advisable to prolong the conversation; I therefore made no answer, and he retired to his apartments repeating the last phrase."[1]

Such a scene, though it is a fit sequel to the scene of the 18th of February, is a disgrace to France. The ambassador should always be treated with respect; even the ancients considered his person sacred. We shall soon see that Napoleon had other surprises in store for the diplomats.

[1] We give the version of this scene word for word as it is found in Lord Whitworth's despatch to Lord Hawkesbury, 14th March, 1803. Browning, *op. cit.*, p. 115. It is stripped of all the embellishments that have often been added.

CHAPTER VI

THE UNPUBLISHED LETTERS FROM ANDRÉOSSY TO BONAPARTE AND THEIR VITAL IMPORTANCE

REALIZING that it would be most unsatisfactory to return no answer to the offer of arbitration that had been made a month previously by the Czar, Bonaparte determined to reply on the actual day that the scene occurred at the Tuileries.

"A dispute has arisen with England; by the terms of the treaty of Amiens, England was to evacuate Malta in three months, exactly as France was to evacuate the port of Tarentum within the same period. I have scrupulously withdrawn from Tarentum, and on my asking why the English were still in Malta, I received the reply that the Grand-Master had not been appointed. The English were thus already adding a clause to the treaty; after the appointment was made England dropped her mask, and informed me that she wished to occupy Malta for seven more years. For my part I am far from consenting to such a state of affairs, and I am prepared to do my utmost to prevent it."

He then invited Alexander to interest himself in the matter.[1]

Silence would perhaps have been more effective than

[1] Correspondence of Napoleon, 6525, 11th March, 1803. A very similar letter was sent to the King of Prussia.

this impudent attempt at self-justification. It was monstrous for Bonaparte to accuse the English of violating the treaty of Amiens and to utter threats against them when he was himself violating important conditions of the treaties of The Hague and Lunéville. Now Alexander was well informed of the true state of affairs by his London representative, and it must be added that, being disgusted with the First Consul's ill faith, he sympathized rather with London than with Paris. On the 16th of March, Hédouville, our Russian minister, was ordered to complain afresh of England's conduct, and proposals were made to Markoff to come to some arrangement about the King of Sardinia, who had been deprived of Piedmont, and who was being protected by Alexander. Duroc set out for Berlin and a warning was sent to the King of Spain and to the King of the Two Sicilies.

Bonaparte proclaimed everywhere that his quarrel with England would have the most terrible consequences, especially for any Powers which might declare for that country and be within his reach. Finally Talleyrand threatened Whitworth with an immediate invasion of Holland and Hanover, and with the reoccupation of Tarentum.

George III. took care not to imitate the conduct of the First Consul, but, on the contrary, the day after the scene in the Tuileries was known in London, Andréossy went to the Queen's Drawing-Room and was very well received by the King, by the whole Court, by the foreign ambassadors and even by the public.[1] His presence produced an excellent effect, and not the slightest allu-

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 237. Andréossy to Talleyrand, 17th March, 1803.

sion was made to the First Consul's extraordinary behaviour.

Bonaparte failed to understand the lesson which had been given him by George III.

On the 10th of March Andréossy forwarded to the English Cabinet the note quoted above.[1] He had delayed its delivery as long as possible, for he rightly feared the consequences which might ensue. In fact on the 15th he received a reply in which, after a rather confused discussion on the actual possessions of the contracting parties at the treaty of Amiens, Lord Hawkesbury continued in these terms:

"In an official note issued by the French Government, one principle was specially agreed on, viz., that his Majesty should retain some of his conquests in compensation for the important acquisitions of territory made by France upon the continent. This is a sufficient proof that the compact was understood to have been concluded in relation to the then existing state of affairs; for the measure of his Majesty's compensation was to be calculated with reference to the acquisitions of France at that time. And if the interference of the French Government in the general affairs of Europe since that period, if their interposition with respect to Switzerland and Holland, whose independence was guaranteed by them at the time of the conclusion of the Treaty of Peace, if the acquisitions which have been made by France in various quarters, but particularly those in Italy, have extended the territory and increased the power of France: his Majesty would be warranted, *consistently with the spirit of the Treaty of Peace, in claiming equivalents for these acquisitions as some counterpoise to the augmentation of the power of*

[1] *I.e.* the note sent by Bonaparte on 4th March, *vide* p. 40.

France. His Majesty, however, anxious to prevent all ground of misunderstanding, and desirous of consolidating the general peace of Europe, as far as might be in his power, was willing to have waived any pretensions of this nature which he might have a right to advance; and as the other Articles of the Definitive Treaty have been in course of execution on his part, so he would have been ready to carry into effect an arrangement conformable to the true intent and spirit of the tenth Article, the literal execution of that arrangement having been rendered impracticable by circumstances which it was not in his Majesty's power to control.

"Whilst his Majesty was actuated by these sentiments of moderation and forbearance, and was prepared to regulate his conduct in conformity with them, his attention was particularly drawn to the very extraordinary publication of the report of Colonel Sébastiani to the First Consul; this report . . . warranted his Majesty in demanding that satisfaction which, on occasions of this nature, independent Powers in a state of amity have a right to expect from each other. . . . No satisfaction has been afforded, no explanation whatever has been given. . . .

"Under these circumstances his Majesty feels that he has no alternative, and that a just regard to his own honour and to the interests of his people make it necessary for him to declare that he cannot consent that his troops should evacuate the island of Malta until substantial security has been provided for those objects which, under the present circumstances, might be materially endangered by their removal."

The note then insists on the fact that the different conditions stipulated in return for the evacuation of Malta have not been fulfilled, and draws special attention to the refusal of Russia and to the silence of

Prussia, who were both to have guaranteed the new order of things.

"These circumstances would have been sufficient, without any other special grounds, to have warranted his Majesty in delaying the promised evacuation of the island. The evacuation of Tarentum and Brundisium is in no respect connected with that of Malta. The French Government were bound to evacuate the Kingdom of Naples by their treaty of peace with the King of Naples, at a period antecedent to that at which this promise should be carried into effect."[1]

Here is the judgment passed by Andréossy on Lord Hawkesbury's reply.

"It is long, badly written and involved, but it shows clearly enough the attitude of the ministers and the Council. It is not this or that fact, it is the sum total of facts that go to make up the glory of the First Consul and the greatness of France which causes their alarm."

There was evidently some truth in this assertion, for the English were very jealous of the economic rise of France; yet this consideration alone would never have made them decide on war; the occupation of Holland and Switzerland by our troops, and the annexation of Piedmont to the French Republic were the real grievances.[2]

By the same messenger Andréossy sent a long

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 234. Also Browning, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-124.

[2] Cf. O. Browning, *op. cit.*, p. 7; Instruction of Lord Hawkesbury to Lord Whitworth, 14th November, 1803; Lord Hawkesbury to Lord Whitworth, 15th March, 1803. These letters put the matter beyond dispute.

private letter to Bonaparte, in which he is careful to leave him in no doubt about the actual situation in England. He points out that the English are of course jealous of France. "Yet private interest is more powerful than the general welfare. I believe that by confining one's attention to Malta, and by trying to secure to the English some "compensation," for what they call French encroachments, an agreement might be arrived at, if they were left the mere shadow of a continental alliance. Hanover would afford the most advantageous opening, if arrangements, which would be at once useful and agreeable to the King and the nation, were to be made in that quarter."[1] The next day, the 16th of March, the ambassador again discussed the same question in another private letter, addressed to the First Consul:

"There is a report in the City that a post from Lord Whitworth has just made known the intention you have shown of preserving peace. This news has produced an excellent impression. Everything points to a growing distaste for war, though there is no

[1] This is the third letter, 15th March, 1803. In it Andréossy thanks Bonaparte for having satisfactorily concluded a delicate bit of business with one of his old secretaries: he notices the tactlessness of the English ministers, who, the day after the signature of the peace of Amiens, were unable to protect Bonaparte from the pamphleteers and the daily press. There is a eulogy on Addington, who was the King's friend, by virtue of his having been the son of his doctor. Addington is religious, honourable, upright, respected, has great force of character, but lacks courage, and, on account of his birth, he is unsupported by any of the great families. Hawkesbury has the King's affection, because he is the son of Lord Liverpool, the friend and adviser of the King.

doubt that it would be popular and that the country could be more easily roused than in 1793. I hear that the funds have risen 1½ since it was known that I had appeared at court."[1]

As the press-gangs had been stringently employed in the ports to procure the sailors necessary for the navy, the ambassador went on the 18th of March to ask Lord Hawkesbury for explanations. "The preparations," he replied, "have been dictated by prudence, and to ward off the danger of a sudden rupture; there is no fear of a naval conflict taking place in consequence. . . . Besides," added the minister, "France has quite five hundred thousand men under arms."

The General replied coldly that it was necessary to give them their marching orders, and that at present there was no cause for England to feel alarm.

[1] This fourth confidential letter (16th March, 1803) gives an account of the deferential reception given him the day before at the King's *levée*. Another (the fifth) dated the day following, the 17th, tells of his visit to Hawkesbury, and describes how the ambassador asked for an explanation about the armaments which were being prepared at the Woolwich and other workshops. He notices that the ministers are full of attentions for Schimmelpenninck and de l'Arrea, the Dutch and Spanish ministers, in the hope of securing their adherence to the English policy.

CHAPTER VII

ANDRÉOSSY'S APPEAL TO THE FIRST CONSUL

AS can well be imagined, the English minister's reply on the 15th of March, though perfectly logical, was not well received in Paris; on the 18th Bonaparte bade Andréossy declare, without committing himself to paper, that France had neither augmented her territory nor equipped a single vessel, and that the insults of the English press were far more serious than the publication of Sébastiani's report.

It was absurd to compare irresponsible newspaper articles written in a country which enjoyed complete liberty of the press, with the publication of a confidential report in an official organ. Moreover, Bonaparte was playing with the truth when he said that French territory had not been increased since the peace of Amiens, for out of Piedmont six new *départements* had been formed, and the ambassador had orders to make the false statement without putting it in writing. Nor was that all; on the same day Bonaparte sent the General a second order, telling him to forward another note as if written on his own initiative, though the First Consul himself supplied the subject matter. He not only made no offer to discuss the points at issue, but again summoned the English to forthwith cede Malta to the Neapolitans,

who were to keep the island, until the Maltese Order should resume possession.

This letter, with its extraordinary proposal, took seven days to reach London from Paris, and the General, cut off as he was from all communications with France, found himself in a most difficult position. Finally, on the 28th of March, he gave the note to Lord Hawkesbury. On leaving the minister's house, he wrote to Talleyrand: "The Cabinet are still peaceably inclined, and the Foreign Ministers are urging them not to abandon this attitude."

Next day he had another hour's conversation with Lord Hawkesbury. Expressed in the most formal terms, the result of his visit was that neither the King, nor the Government, nor the Nation wanted war, and the difficulty was to devise a way out of the awkward situation which should be honourable to both Governments. Andréossy records his conviction that "England is decidedly in favour of peace, since she can see no advantage in a resumption of hostilities." [1]

To emphasize his statements still further, the ambassador took advantage of his former friendly relations with the First Consul, and on the 2nd of April wrote him a letter still more urgent than his previous communications. It is the sixth of the unpublished letters, and we quote it entire:

"12th Germinal, Year 11.[2]

"CITIZEN PREMIER CONSUL,

"The English Cabinet have been distressed

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 268. Andréossy to Talleyrand, 29th March, 1803.

[2] [*I.e.*, 2nd April. *Vide* Appendix.—TR.]

by the note which I forwarded to the Secretary of State, and I have not yet received an answer.

"Being persuaded that you desire peace and are in need of it, I am acting in accordance with that principle, but you afford the English Cabinet no means of escape from the unfortunate position in which they have become involved, and however serious the consequences, it is certain that they will take up any challenge they may receive. It is true that the age and infirmities of the King make him look with an anxious eye on the prospect of being harassed in his latter days by a terrible war and by the stress of work which such a situation necessarily entails, but the responsible statesmen feel bound to try to secure a peaceful opening for the next reign, which under the happiest conditions must be a stormy one.

"The prayers, the needs and the wishes of this country are for peace.

"God forbid that I should for a moment think that France ought to forego the least of her advantages, and certainly my regard for this country is not likely to lead me astray, but I am morally certain, that by appearing not to exert pressure on England you could easily obtain all which is necessary to secure the safety of the French Government and preserve the advantages it derives from the countries under its control; you might thus effect the consolidation of that fine edifice which your hands have raised, but which arouses the jealousy of certain Frenchmen, who are perhaps more treacherous foes than the London journalists.

"There is ample material for another rising in the Vendée country, and the chief Powers on the Continent could easily be combined into a coalition against France.

"I have learnt on the most excellent authority that designs have been formed on South America. St.

Domingo will be a prey to insurrection. Puisaye has just returned from Canada; he has sent to tell me that he will not associate himself with any scheme that may be formed against us.

"I have considered it my duty, Citizen Premier Consul, to bring to your notice some of the evils that would be the inevitable result of war, and the means by which you may easily preserve peace. The loyalty of my intentions, and my devotion to your person, will prompt you to pardon my outspokenness.

"F. ANDRÉOSSY."

On the 3rd of April Lord Hawkesbury replied to the note of March the 28th, to the effect that "the British Government considered itself justified in entertaining alarm about the ambitious schemes of the French Government: that it wished to receive satisfactory assurances on the subject: that such assurances had been asked for on previous occasions, but that hitherto the French Government had refused to offer any explanation, while at the same time it continued to insist on the evacuation of Malta: that the English Government was making a supreme effort in ordering Whitworth to find out for certain whether the French Government persisted in its refusal to explain its position: that the British Cabinet earnestly requested a satisfactory account of the matter."

The demands contained in this note were as justifiable as its terms were courteous; it did not fail to impress the French ambassador. He realized that his master could no longer refuse to offer an explanation about the occupation of Holland, Switzerland, and Piedmont, without bearing the whole responsibility for the rupture which would be the logical consequence of the violence with which he had clamoured

for the evacuation of Malta. In a letter to Talleyrand, Andréossy writes:

"Lord Hawkesbury's note still leaves the French Government the alternative of peace or war. *It is not a secret desire of the British Government to keep Malta*, as Lord Hawkesbury has actually told a person of my acquaintance, in these words: 'We cannot evacuate Malta, until we find ourselves in a position to assure Parliament and the nation that the discussion has assumed a fairly peaceful aspect; but we do not say, either Malta or war!'"

Andréossy concludes:

"Everything depends on the French Government: if it is willing to give an explanation, a satisfactory compromise will easily be arrived at between the two Powers; if it refuses, war is inevitable, and will be popular in England. If the French Government discusses the matter in a generous spirit, Europe will attribute it to the magnanimity of the First Consul and to his desire to preserve peace among all the Powers, for no one will dare to suggest weakness as a motive; in these circumstances peace will be preserved and England will be persuaded to make a free surrender to the First Consul of anything which he is justified in asking of her."[1]

The same day, the 14th of *Germinal*,[2] Andréossy sent a last appeal to the First Consul:

"The Government has tried to secure the adherence of Mr. Grey, a member whose talents have won the greatest respect in the House, and who enjoys a very

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fols. 278 and 280. Andréossy to Talleyrand, 4th April, 1803.

[2] [*I.e.*, 4th April. *Vide* Appendix.—TR.]

high reputation. He has replied by stating his fixed attachment to Mr. Fox. I am to see him to-morrow at the Duchess of Devonshire's. The old Opposition is in favour of the execution of the treaty of Amiens. It will support the Cabinet in both Houses. The Grenville party (the party that favours war with France) is held in abhorrence. Pitt is leaving the neighbourhood of London and retiring to Bath.

"*Everybody wants peace; by preserving the peace of Europe, you will crush this country, without appealing to the arbitrament of the mailed fist.* But I cannot too often repeat my conviction, that any Cabinet which may be in power must be treated with tact, for the Cabinet is responsible to public opinion as expressed in the Houses of Parliament.

"The King is far from having an absolute power, but he has remarkable influence; the people are accustomed to look up to him, and respect the exemplary character of his private life."[1]

"In a country where the main interest is business, and where the merchant class is so prosperous, the Government has to appeal to the merchants for extraordinary funds, and they have the right to insist that their interests should be considered in the policy which is adopted.

"On the interaction of these three elements depends the working of the British Constitution. The tactics and methods adopted by the Cabinet decide whether Parliament is to be crushed and discredited as it was by Pitt and Dundas, or whether parties are to come into existence for the support of mere mediocrities. The present Administration is of the latter order; it is moreover supported by the King, whose wishes are respected because of his advanced years, and be-

[1] It is well known that George III. was resolutely in favour of peace with France. The picture that follows of the English system is interesting and essentially true to life.

cause of the trust he reposes in wise and upright counsellors.

"Never, I believe, in any circumstances were men more generally agreed on the desirability of keeping peace, and you are now in a most favourable position to decide the world's destiny for all time.

"With every assurance of my most sincere respect,

"F. ANDRÉOSSY."[1]

These two private letters of Andréossy to the First Consul of the 12th and 14th of Germinal (2nd and 4th April), and his letter to Talleyrand (see p. 55) are historical documents of the very greatest importance. Why have they not been published till to-day? They prove conclusively that the responsibility for the rupture of the peace of Amiens rests entirely with Bonaparte. It is impossible to throw doubt on Andréossy's experience or character. Intimate as he was with members of the highest London Society, and a personal friend of Addington and Hawkesbury, he was fully aware how sincerely the English wished for peace and how persistently the Cabinet strove to preserve it. Even if Bonaparte neglected Andréossy's warnings on this occasion, he did him justice on subsequent occasions by intrusting to him the important diplomatic posts of Vienna and Constantinople.

In the spring of 1803 the right policy would have been to gain time for the discussion of the Dutch and Maltese questions in a friendly spirit, and then, as public opinion in England began to cool down, we should have been able to obtain a satisfactory arrangement.

[1] *Archives Nationales.* AFiv 1672. This letter is the seventh and last written by the ambassador to Bonaparte during his stay in London.

Unfortunately Bonaparte no longer wished for peace; his only object was, in deference to public opinion, to force the English to take the initiative in recalling their ambassador, and in this he was successful.

CHAPTER VIII

MODERATION OF THE ENGLISH CABINET, ITS NOTES OF THE 26TH OF APRIL AND THE 7TH OF MAY

ON the 7th of April Whitworth sent Talleyrand a letter similar to that handed to Andréossy [1] by Hawkesbury on the 3rd, and the day following, Talleyrand declared that the French Government would never consent to anything which might prejudice the independence of the Maltese Order on their island, but that if the English Government could suggest an arrangement which would lead to the termination of the present difficulties, the French Government would have no objection to meeting them by some special agreement.[2]

Of Holland and Piedmont Talleyrand said nothing. Andréossy, advised at once by Talleyrand of this new method of avoiding the point at issue, awaited anxiously the final reply of the English Cabinet.

Three weeks elapsed. The English Cabinet deliberated, consulted the ministers of the Powers represented in London, studied its position, and endeavoured to ascertain where it could look for support, if the First

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 54.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, p. 290. 8th April, 1803.

Consul forced it to make a declaration of war. Finally, on the 26th of April, Whitworth proposed to Talleyrand certain lines of discussion:

(1) That his Britannic Majesty should continue to occupy Malta for ten years.

(2) That the island of Lampedousa should be ceded him in full ownership.

(3) That the French troops should evacuate Holland and Switzerland.[1]

Could a discussion have been reasonably conducted on these lines? We do not hesitate to reply in the affirmative. In fact, the English were only asking for the possession of Malta for ten years and for the ownership of the barren islet of Lampedousa. In exchange we were to keep Piedmont for good. It was only right that we should evacuate Holland, for we had no serious reason for keeping it, and were authorized to do so by no treaty. But Bonaparte wished to retain both Holland and Piedmont.

Unhappily Whitworth declared at the same time, that if within seven days a convention had not been signed, he had orders to withdraw his credentials and return to London, which made his proposition read like an ultimatum.

Talleyrand discovered in it a "contempt for formalities, the inevitable effects of which it was not possible that we realized."[2]

Bonaparte was highly indignant, but it was absolutely necessary to impose some limit on the fruitless

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600; and Oscar Browning, *loc. cit.*, p. 197.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, supplement, vol. xxxii., fol. 58.

exchange of notes, which seemed likely to go on for ever. Had the word ultimatum appeared in the text, Whitworth would have been at once called on to withdraw from France. Bonaparte had advised Talleyrand to that effect on the 1st of May.[1]

The mode of presentation of the English proposals was very correct, and regard was paid to strict formalities. Bonaparte had been far less ceremonious in the way he had treated the English for the last five months. The day following the delivery of the note, he imposed several new Customs' regulations calculated to severely hamper English commerce.

Being kept without news for three weeks, and having only a vague knowledge of the progress of events in Paris, Andréossy was in an impossible position. On the 5th of May he learnt of the delivery of the English proposals of the 26th of April, and immediately went to discuss them with Lord Hawkesbury.

This visit led to nothing. The Dutch question was the chief difficulty. The next day Andréossy was summoned afresh, and was present at the King's *levée*; in the evening he returned to the minister's house and stayed there till midnight. Lord Hawkesbury seemed calmer and more confident, and informed him that unless they had good news by Monday at latest, the King would send down a message to Parliament laying before the Houses the condition of affairs and the country's position.

Andréossy was convinced that advices from Holland contributed to precipitate this last measure; Lord Auckland, who was strongly in favour of peace,

[1] Correspondence of Napoleon, 6720.

told him *that the occupation of Holland by our troops, and the erection of defensive works at several points,* were regarded by the British Cabinet as signs of the annexation of the country, which would seriously interfere with our coming to an arrangement.[1] Andréossy then looked on any further attempt as almost impossible, and quietly gave the preliminary orders necessary for his departure.

It was not till the 2nd of May, the last possible day, that Talleyrand acknowledged the receipt of Whitworth's proposals of the 26th of April; he stated that, as Lampedousa did not belong to France, we could make no arrangements affecting it; that the First Consul could do no more than communicate with Spain, Holland, Russia, Prussia, and Austria, and get their opinion about the proposals of his Britannic Majesty which would modify a formal clause of the treaty of Amiens. As for the evacuation of Holland by the French troops, the First Consul could only repeat that Holland would be evacuated the moment that effect was given to the arrangements made in the treaty of Amiens concerning the various parts of the world.[2]

This dilatory answer was in no sense a real reply, but merely raised again the previous question.

For if Bonaparte was honestly prepared to evacuate Holland why did he not accept the English proposals of the 26th of April, or at least discuss them in good faith?

[1] Since the beginning of April Bonaparte had sent orders that Brest, le Havre, Lorient and the coasts of the Channel from Amiens to the mouth of the Schelde should be put into a state of defence. Semonville, the French minister in Holland, insisted on arming the forts of the Dutch coast.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 313.

A despatch addressed later to the King of Prussia gives the key to the mystery and explains the apparent contradiction. Bonaparte writes to him: "I have decided to evacuate Holland and Switzerland, *but I will not agree to do so in any treaty*."[1]

Unwillingness to put into writing a verbal promise argues a determination to break engagements entered into. A peremptory refusal to evacuate Holland and Switzerland would at least have borne the stamp of nobility.

Ever since the beginning of April, Bonaparte had decided on war at all costs. His only reason for delaying the formal break as long as possible was to gain time for the completion of his most urgent preparations. To obtain a few days further respite, he gave the English ambassador, on the 4th of May, the option of handing over Malta to the Russians; and so, whenever Lord Whitworth mentioned Holland, Bonaparte replied by a reference to Malta.[2]

Talleyrand was much distressed at the position of affairs, for he was strongly in favour of peace. He wished to consolidate the edifice which had been built up by the First Consul, and feared that the fruit of the past successes would be endangered by a war against England supported by a number of Continental Powers. He was well aware of the intrigues

[1] Correspondence of Napoleon, 7032, 30th August, 1803.

[2] Cf. A. Thiers, *op. cit.*, vol. iv. pp. 332 *sqq.* M. Thiers passes over the grave question of Holland, which was a most important factor in the decisions made by the British Cabinet and Bonaparte, and which was the real cause of the rupture. The authors who have written on the same subject consider it of but secondary importance. Its real significance is unmistakable.

which were being conducted by the English ministers at the various European courts, and also of the intimate relations of Whitworth with Markoff and the other diplomatists.

Actuated by these motives, he wrote again to Andréossy and told him to try to influence the English minister by a further interview.

"You must visit Lord Hawkesbury at once and make use of all the materials I have sent you during the last few days to try to bring the minister to a reasonable decision." Andréossy would far rather have been authorized to formally promise the evacuation of Flushing and Utrecht, but he could not do so without definite orders.

On receipt of this despatch he hurried off to see Lord Hawkesbury, while the Dutch minister, Schimmelpenninck, who was devoted to the First Consul, hastened to call on Lord Addington. They were informed that the English Cabinet refused to cede Malta to the Russians, but were willing to make a concession. In fact that very evening, the 7th of May, a messenger had been sent to Paris with the following proposals, which were even more favourable to us than the proposals of April the 26th.

"(1) The English are prepared to hand over Malta to its inhabitants, and will recognize the island as an independent State as soon as the fortifications of Lampedousa are completed.

"(2) The French Government shall not interfere with the cession of Lampedousa to the English by the King of the Two Sicilies, to whom it at present belongs.

"(3) The King of England will recognize the king-

dom of Etruria, and the Ligurian and Italian Republics; Holland shall be evacuated within one month after the conclusion of an agreement, based on the principles of this proposal; Switzerland shall be evacuated and a suitable territorial provision shall be assigned to the King of Sardinia in Italy.

"Secret provision: His Britannic Majesty shall not be called upon by the French Government to evacuate Malta until the expiration of a term of ten years." [1]

Hawkesbury explained to Andréossy that the secret provision was inserted solely to save the position of the British Ministry and to enable the Government to give satisfactory explanations to the Opposition and to the public, but that in reality Malta would be evacuated at the same time that the French evacuated Holland.

On the 10th of May, Whitworth submitted these final proposals to Talleyrand, and as a last proof of his good intentions, he added a note to the effect that the island would be restored to the Knights of Malta and not to its inhabitants, if the First Consul so preferred.[2]

Surely no better concession could have been made. And yet Bonaparte wrote to several European Courts to say that the English had forced his hand.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fols. 321 and 356.

[2] This additional note bears no date, but it is all in Lord Whitworth's handwriting, though not signed by him. F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fol. 334.

CHAPTER IX

THE RUPTURE

IN vain did Talleyrand and Joseph Bonaparte try to influence the First Consul; it was impossible to persuade him to enter into negotiations with Lord Whitworth concerning the recent English proposals.

Receiving an evasive answer on the 12th, the English ambassador demanded his passport, was at once given it, and left Paris that same evening at 9 o'clock.[1]

In accordance with an agreement made between him and Talleyrand, he travelled very slowly, on the chance that messengers might be sent direct to London with fresh proposals. This actually happened. The terrible responsibility he was about to assume for France filled Bonaparte with remorse at having allowed Lord Whitworth to leave the capital. On the 13th of May, he sent through Talleyrand the following letter to Andréossy.

"You will employ Citizen Schimmelpenninck or any indirect means to suggest to the British Cabinet, that if they absolutely refuse to cede Malta to one of the Powers who are acting as guarantors we might be willing to permit England to remain in the island

[1] Oscar Browning, *op. cit.*, p. 233 *sqq.*

for a further period of ten years, on condition that France should for the same number of years occupy Tarentum, Otranto, and all the positions she occupied in the kingdom of Naples on the occasion of the signature of the treaty of Amiens.

"If this suggestion is favourably received, then let it be known that you are authorized to sign an agreement couched in the following terms:

"(1) The British troops shall be permitted to occupy Malta for ten years.

"(2) For the same period of time the French troops shall occupy, as they did at the time of the signature of the treaty of Amiens, the positions of Tarentum and Otranto, which they only evacuated in pursuance of Article 11 of the said treaty.

"You must realize, General, that if you have the slightest reason to believe that the proposal will not recommend itself to them, you must be careful to leave no trace of it, so that it may always be possible to deny that the French Government ever agreed to these terms.

"The First Consul leaves it to your discretion to decide what use you will make of the authorization he now gives you."[1]

At midnight, from Saint-Cloud, Talleyrand again wrote to the General with his own hand at Bonaparte's dictation:

"Citizen ambassador, I sent a messenger six hours ago, to inform you that Lord Whitworth had demanded his passport. The First Consul does not deem it advisable that you should leave London until it is well known that Lord Whitworth has left Paris. The First Consul, however improbable it may appear, still hopes

[1] F. O. R., England, supplement, vol. xxxii., fol. 76. Talleyrand to Andréossy, 13th May, 1803.

that there may be business requiring your presence in London. For it may be that the English Government has now a truer appreciation of the position owing to the arrangements which have been made by the Emperor of Russia and the statements of the Russian minister; consequently the Cabinet may resolve to adopt the proposal to hand over Malta to one of the three Powers acting as guarantors. It would be well, therefore, if you are in London, to wait for a fresh post, but if you have already left, to continue your journey to Dover. If you are still in London, the First Consul sees no harm in your attending a general conference to point out the consequences of the minister's conduct and to show the really peaceful character of our dispositions, mentioning the position that has been forced on us and our determination to make war rather than suffer humiliation. However, to-morrow, in the course of the day I will send a messenger to guide you in your future conduct.

"I have the honour, etc.,
"CH.-M. TALLEYRAND."[1]

It is difficult to realize how the evacuation of Flushing could have humiliated France, especially as it involved the cession of Malta by the English. But to propose that we should reoccupy Tarentum when we were actually holding Flushing was to preclude the possibility of a settlement.

On the receipt of these two letters on the 15th of May, Andréossy thought he might yet hold a last conference with Lord Hawkesbury, for it was not yet absolutely certain in London that Lord Whitworth had left Paris. "I found him cold and inflexible," he says, "he told me that it was too late. I stayed over half

[1] F. O. R., England, supplement, vol. xxxii., fol. 70.

an hour in his room; the conversation dragged; there were periods of silence, long pauses and many changes of the subject. He wanted to leave me to come to the point and I waited for him, but these tactics were of no avail; candidly I did not expect much to come of it; the whole business was formal."

Then he informed Schimmelpenninck of Bonaparte's intentions and found him quite ready to fall in with the views of the First Consul. He thereupon went to Hawkesbury and explained that if the point at issue was the cession of Malta to the English for ten years, this could easily be secured by agreeing to the French occupation of Tarentum for an equal period. Lord Hawkesbury replied that the suggestion was not a new one, that it had been discussed in the course of the negotiations, that Lord Whitworth had mentioned it in his correspondence, but that the British Cabinet had refused the offer as being inconsistent with the relations existing between England and the King of Naples. He would mention the matter to Lord Addington and give the reply to Schimmelpenninck within the hour. Several hours passed without any news and Andréossy concluded that the proposal was rejected.[1] Had Bonaparte proposed to keep Flushing while the English kept Malta, it is conceivable that, at the last, the two Powers might have come to an understanding, but while absolutely refusing to retire from this "rampart" of the Dutch, he insisted on the evacuation of Malta by the English.

After Lord Hervey, Under-Secretary of State had come and officially notified the ambassador that Lord

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 600, fols. 370 and 371. Andréossy to Talleyrand, 15th May, 1803.

Whitworth would be sleeping that evening (the 15th) at Boulogne, and would be at Calais the next day and embark with the evening tide, Andréossy, seeing nothing left for him to do in London, announced his intention of departing the next day, the 16th, in the early morning.

On reaching Dover, on the evening of the 16th, he found that no vessel was allowed to set sail, and wrote to Lord Hawkesbury, asking for a direct order to allow his boat to leave England, for it would not be seemly for either country that an ambassador should depart as a fugitive.

"I was still at Dover, on the evening of the 17th, when Lord Whitworth disembarked about 11 o'clock; he asked me to come and see him next morning; I paid him a visit and he insisted on seeing me to my boat, and was most cordial. He assured me that he was setting out for London with the intention of recommending his Government to adopt a conciliatory attitude." Before leaving London, Andréossy stated that "public opinion insisted that war was impossible, or at any rate most undesirable. The people between London and Dover showed clearly that they were of the same opinion. I was treated with marked respect up to the last moment."

Andréossy left England on the 18th of May, 1803, and was in Paris the next day.

For the negative result of this mission Andréossy was in no way to blame; on the contrary, he had all the flexibility and intelligence required by the difficulty of the post.

The documents we have read prove that unfortunately the whole blame does not attach to the

CHAPTER X

UNJUSTIFIABLE ACTIONS OF FRANCE AND ENGLAND. —ARREST OF THE DIPLOMATS

AS soon as the rupture had actually occurred, the First Consul felt bound to justify his policy to the European Governments. To the Czar he sent a memorandum, inclosing two documents, in which not a word was said about the occupation of Holland, which was the real cause of the war.

To the King of Portugal, to the Pope, to the Swiss Landamman, and to the King of Prussia he spoke of the limitless arrogance and injustice of the English.[1] But Bonaparte made no attempt to convince the Austrian Emperor of the justice of his cause, for his signature was still extant to the treaty of Lunéville and the Hague Convention.

The two belligerents, embittered by the long diplomatic discussion, proceeded without delay to acts which were inconsistent with the Law of Nations and the dictates of Humanity.

On the 16th of May the King of England laid an embargo on French shipping and issued letters of marque. In pursuance of his orders the English, on

[1] Napoleon, Correspondence, 6748, 7032-33, 17th May, 23rd August, 1803.

the 20th of May, seized two French merchant vessels in the Straits of Audierne and made their crews captive. To avenge this the First Consul put in prison all the English who were in France, a thousand in all, and most of them belonging to the nobility and the army. This arbitrary and unprecedented act was severely criticised by contemporaries. The English Cabinet in a letter of the 15th of June, 1803, addressed to Talleyrand, declared that the arrest of non-combatants and of English subjects residing on French territory was a violation of the provisions of international law. Bonaparte alleged that the British men-of-war had seized French vessels before the actual commencement of hostilities, whereas war should have been officially declared before any such action were taken. The British Cabinet replied that it was an old custom which had always been in force; they referred to the seizure in 1755, and stated that usage sanctioned the drawing of a distinction between those in residence on the mainland and those on board ships on the high seas. The English argument is a fair statement of established usage, though not legally valid. The conduct of the two belligerents was equally ununjust; but while the English only seized a few sailors and passengers, Bonaparte imprisoned a large number of the English aristocracy.

In another case Bonaparte's action was inexcusable. We have already seen that he paid but scant respect to the sacred character of an ambassador; he overstepped all bounds, however, by ordering the arrest of Lord Elgin and Sir James Crawford. Lord Elgin was ambassador and envoy-extraordinary of King George III. at Constantinople, and was returning to

England on an English frigate; as he had fallen seriously ill, he landed at Marseilles to reach Calais by the shortest possible route. He obtained a passport from Lord Whitworth, but while passing through Paris on the 23rd of May he was arrested. In vain did he plead his immunity as a diplomat, the sacred character of his person as an ambassador, and the special circumstances of his illness. In accordance with Bonaparte's command, Talleyrand informed him that his arrest was in order,[1] and he went to swell the number of his imprisoned compatriots. The behaviour of Lord Elgin to France during the Egyptian campaign does not justify this measure, for he was then at Constantinople, and held the post of ambassador at the Court of a Power which was at war with us.[2]

Sir James Crawford, the representative of England at Copenhagen, was returning home and had left Paris on the 8th of May, but had fallen ill at Calais. Though he was covered by the same rights to immunity as those possessed by Lord Elgin, he was none the less put in prison.

Bonaparte carried this disgraceful policy to the extent of detaining in Calais Mandeville, Lord Whitworth's secretary, and the staff of the Paris embassy as it was about to embark. The ambassador's baggage was also seized, and was only released when the British Cabinet threatened to confiscate the belongings of General Andréossy in London. The First Consul

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 601, fols. 285, 293 and 297.

[2] Cf. our study, *La Mission de Sébastiani à Constantinople en* 1801, in the *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* of July, 1903.

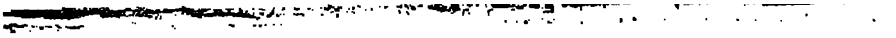
must have been furious at his failure to lay hands on the person of the English ambassador.

A still more extraordinary event occurred in the following year. Sir George Rumbold, the English minister to the Government of Hamburg, was taking a holiday in his villa, which lay on the right bank of the Elbe, that is to say, within the boundaries of Lower Saxony, in the territory of the King of Prussia. Our troops were in possession of the left bank. During the night, between the 7th and 8th of October, some infantry and fifteen *gendarmes* rowed across the Elbe, entered Rumbold's house and made him prisoner.[1]

Napoleon excused this fresh violation of international law committed on the territory of a neutral Power, much to its annoyance, by saying that Rumbold was acting as a spy for the English Government, and was trying to tamper with our troops. This was the case,[2] for the diplomat was a worthy successor of Drake at Munich, and of Spencer Smith at Stuttgart. But that was no reason for violating Prussian territory, and Bonaparte, whose foreign envoys did as much or more secret service than those of other Powers, might well have foregone the arrest of Rumbold. A vigorous protest was made by the Prussian sovereign, and he was released on the 30th of October.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 602, fol. 342.

[2] The documents that describe this episode are of no great interest. The reference is F. O. R., England, supplement, vol. xv.



PART II

THE NEGOTIATIONS OF 1806

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR FAILURE

CHAPTER XI

NAPOLEON'S ILL-TIMED OVERTURES.—FOX'S LETTER

NAPOLEON'S first act on ascending the throne was to endeavour to win over the King of England. Writing to him on the 2nd of January, 1805, he proposed a cessation of hostilities. The Emperor appealed to George III.'s well-known proclivities for peace, and insisted on the necessity of insuring quiet and repose to the numerous members of the English Royal Family. The letter was brought on board an English brig, lying off Boulogne, by a ship's ensign and forwarded to Lord Harrowby, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.[1]

The overtures were premature; the two nations had hardly begun war and were preparing to enter on a terrible struggle. Napoleon was concentrating his forces in the camp at Boulogne, with the object of making a descent on England; England was spinning the web of the Third Coalition. No time was lost in sending a reply. On the 14th of January the English Cabinet answered in these terms:

"There is nothing his Majesty desires so much as to seize the first opportunity of restoring to his subjects the benefits of peace on a basis consistent with

[1] Napoleon's Correspondence, 8252.

the security and welfare of his possessions. His Majesty feels sure that this object can only be attained by arrangements which will at once secure the safety and tranquillity of Europe and guarantee it against a repetition of the dangers and miseries in which it has been involved. In accordance with this opinion his Majesty considers it impossible to give any definite reply to the overtures which have been received, until he has had time to communicate with the Continental Powers to whom his Majesty is attached in close relationship by alliances, especially with the Emperor of Russia, who has given the strongest proofs of the wise and noble feelings which actuate him, and of the interest that he takes in the safety and independence of Europe."[1]

Napoleon's proposal was perhaps less sincere than that made under similar circumstances on his accession to the consulate; King George's refusal had at least the virtue of frankness.

* * * * *

When during the course of a long war the belligerents bring forward proposals of peace, and negotiations are pursued which eventually lead to no result, it is customary for each party to throw the blame of the failure on its rival, and to make an accusation of bad faith. This occurred in a remarkable way at the close of the tentative proposals discussed by George III. and Napoleon the day after the battle of Austerlitz.

In his statement of the 21st of October, 1806, the King of England blamed his opponent for the unfortunate result of the negotiations; and Napoleon, when he published this declaration in the *Moniteur* of the 26th of November, added observations which credited

[1] F. O. R., England Correspondence, vol. 602, fol. 369.

the Court of St. James's with all the odium attaching to the prolongation of the war.

Thiers[1] explains these events at length and almost adopts Napoleon's standpoint, just as in the matter of the rupture of the peace of Amiens in 1803 he justifies the First Consul.

Is it possible, from the documents which refer to the negotiations of 1806, to see and establish clearly the responsibility for their failure?

On the 26th of November, 1806, Napoleon had some of these documents published in the *Moniteur*, but was careful to suppress a certain number of them, including some of the most interesting ones. In Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*[2] there appears an English translation of several documents which bear the same reproach as those published in the *Moniteur*. It is therefore impossible to decide this question fully and impartially from these publications alone, and we must refer to the records of the French and English Foreign Offices.

It is notorious how unexpectedly the conference opened. Pitt had just died and had been replaced at the head of the British Ministry by Fox, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who was in favour of a peaceful policy. Meanwhile Lord Grenville, Lord Howick and Mr. Windham, who were members of the late cabinet retained their posts under the new Premier.

On the 6th of March, 1806, Talleyrand received from Fox the following letter, which was sent through

[1] *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, vol. iv., pp. 440 *sqq*.

[2] Papers relative to the negotiation with France. Presented to both Houses of Parliament, in Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. viii., col. 92 *sqq*.

Jacobi Kloest, the Prussian minister in London, by way of the Prussian consul at Rotterdam. The Foreign Ministers in Holland, as in the eighteenth century, acted as intermediaries between France and England, now that these two Powers were at war.[1]

"Downing Street,
"20th February, 1806.

"SIR,

"As an honest man, I think it is my duty to notify you as soon as possible of a rather strange circumstance that has come to my knowledge. The shortest means will be to inform you as simply as may be how the whole matter occurred. A few days ago a man sent me word that he had just disembarked at Gravesend without a passport, and begged me to send him one, because he had just come from Paris with news that *would be very welcome to me.*

"I sent for him and he came next day. I saw him alone in my room, where, after a few unimportant remarks, the scoundrel had the impudence to tell me, that to secure the peace of all the reigning houses it was necessary to do away with the leader of the French, and that a house had been hired at Passy for this purpose, whence this dastardly project could be executed with certainty and without any risk. I have not discovered whether ordinary guns or fire-arms of some new pattern were to be employed. I am not ashamed to admit to you, who know me, that I was much embarrassed to find myself in conversation with a declared assassin. The consequence of my confusion was that I ordered him to leave me instantly, and at the same time gave instructions to the police-officer who had him in charge to send him out of the country as soon as possible.

[1] Cf. *L'Alliance franco-hollandaise contre l'Angleterre*, 1734-1788, by the author; 400 pp. in 8vo. Plon-Nourrit et Cie, 1902.

"On considering further what I had just done, I recognized the mistake I had made in letting him go, before I had sent you information, and I had him put in custody. Probably there is no truth in the story, and the wretched creature only wished to play the braggart in making promises which in his opinion would be agreeable to me.

"In any case I deem it my duty to warn you of what has occurred before setting him at large, for our laws do not permit me to detain him for long, but he will not be set free until you have had time to put yourself on your guard against his attempts, should he still entertain his evil designs; when he is set free I will see to it, that he leaves by a port as distant as possible from France. In this country he calls himself Guillet de la Gevrillière, but I think it is an assumed name. He had no papers of any sort to show me; at the outset I did him the honour of mistaking him for a spy.[1]

"I am, sir, etc.,

"C. J. Fox."[2]

Together with this official letter, Fox sent to Talleyrand a private note, the first of a long series of

[1] This scoundrel was arrested in Paris and confined in the prison, then commonly termed the Temple prison, at the end of May. Fouché only advised Talleyrand of the fact on the 29th. The fellow had the impudence to say that Fox had proposed to him the assassination of the Emperor, when he recalled him for the second time from Gravesend harbour. (F. O. R., vol. 603 fol. 78.)

[2] We know that some months after the conclusion of the peace of Amiens in 1802 Fox came to Paris. He was received there as a friend of France, and with great manifestations of sympathy from all classes of society. His two interviews with the First Consul are well known, and have been recorded in detail.

friendly communications which were exchanged between the two ministers in the course of these negotiations. It is sufficiently curious to warrant quotation.

"I should like to add a few lines to my letter, to say that my colleagues, without exception, all think as I do about the matter in question. Though it was judged expedient that I should write to you in my own name, I can only assure you that the feelings expressed in my letter have the entire approval not only of the other ministers but also of my master, the King. When I gave his Majesty the news of what I have had the honour to relate to you, his indignation was as intense as it was natural, and he was quite overwhelmed with the horror which must ever strike a noble character on hearing of such a project.

"I must ask you to believe that my use of the expression 'leader of the French' was not occasioned by any want of respect. It would however have been hardly seemly for me to act otherwise, when I was writing in my official capacity as Secretary of State, in view of the relations existing between the two Courts.

"I would commend myself to your affectionate remembrance, and would ask you to give my kindest respects to Marshal Berthier, and conclude with every assurance of my most sincere regard,

"C. J. Fox."[1]

The letter is as well expressed as it is carefully thought out. The move on the part of the British Cabinet was obviously an invitation to make proposals for peace. Thus England made the first advance. Napoleon was not in any way offended by being referred to as "the leader of the French." "You know

[1] F. O. R., MSS., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 15.

that he is too enlightened and too really great," wrote Talleyrand, "not to consider the title you have given him of 'leader of the French nation' as his real claim to distinction. On hearing of it, he exclaimed, 'I can recognize the honourable motives which have always actuated Mr. Fox, a man who is most admirably fitted to see what is fine and truly great in any position.'"

At the same time Talleyrand advised Fox that Napoleon was well disposed for peace, but said nothing further.[1] Determined not to let the matter drop, the English Cabinet proposed by return of post not an inconstant truce, but a sure and lasting peace. They offered to discuss the terms at once, and even to come to a provisional arrangement about some of the chief points, pending the intervention of a Russian plenipotentiary, for England could not treat without Russia, having entered into formal engagements with that Power.

"You see," concluded Fox, "how ready we are here to smooth over all difficulties which might delay the discussion we are proposing. In view of the resources at our command, it is not that we are afraid of continued hostilities; of all European Powers, England perhaps suffers least from the continuation of war, but we are no less sorry on that account for the distress of other nations. Let us do our best to terminate them and try, if possible, to reconcile the respective interests and the glory of our two countries."[2]

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 20. Talleyrand to Fox, 5th March, 1806, and fol. 19, private letter.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 29. Fox to Talleyrand, 26th March, 1806.

The private letter inclosed emphasized still further the desire of the King and the Cabinet to make peace, and asked for the liberation of three English nobles who had been detained at Verdun since 1803, in company with a large number of their compatriots.

In his reply, dated the 1st of April, Talleyrand, after a long and vague dissertation on the advantages of peace, proposed to the King of England that he should nominate a plenipotentiary who should repair to Lille. A passport for him was inclosed in the letter, and Napoleon undertook to send a representative to the same place as soon as it should be known that the King had agreed to the proposal.

"You see that we waste no time in getting through business," added the minister in his private letter to Fox. "You cannot realize how glad I am to be able to tell you that the Emperor is delighted with the tone of your letters. We could not wish for a better omen than the attitude he has adopted."[1]

Unfortunately for the world's peace, Napoleon was not quite sincere; he did intend to come to terms with England, but not at once. Considering the feelings which actuated the British Government, the preliminaries for peace could have been signed within a month,[2] had the Emperor so wished. But at the moment he was full of the idea of re-establishing the Western Empire in the form of "vassal" kingdoms to be conferred on his brothers, and he intended to use

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 33. Talleyrand to Fox, 1st April, 1806.

[2] Cf. Lumbroso, *Napoleone e l'Inghilterra*, Roma, 1897. The author does not believe in Napoleon's sincerity on this occasion.

the Confederation of the Rhine to determine the position of the German princes.

Joseph had been named King of Naples on the 5th of January previous, and the English consented to recognize him if compensation were given to the King and Queen of Naples, who had fled to Sicily. But Napoleon's work was not finished in April, 1806; the Rhine Confederation had not yet received definite sanction, nor was Louis seated on the throne of Holland. It will be remembered that the ill-defined occupation of Holland by the First Consul in 1803 was the true cause of the rupture of the peace of Amiens. The English seemed no more ready in 1806 than they had been in 1803 to see Holland fall definitely into Napoleon's power as a "vassal" kingdom. The Emperor did not wish to meet them until these arrangements had been actually put in force, and as the English proposals had come a few months too soon, he hoped, while keeping this in view, to prolong the negotiations until his work had been actually completed.

CHAPTER XII

THE EMPEROR TEMPORIZES

FOX soon unwillingly gave the Emperor a pretext for delay. In a despatch dated the 8th of April, he states "that the conciliatory attitude adopted by both parties is already a great stride made in the direction of peace;" he goes on to request that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire should be specified in the treaty,[1] and prays that Russia may take part in the negotiations. So great, however, was his desire to come to terms, that to avoid any loss of time consequent on the great distance, he added: "As soon as you consent to treat *provisionally* until Russia can intervene, and then to do so in conjunction with her, we shall be ready, without losing a single day, to begin negotiations in the place and in the way that the parties may judge most convenient."

Prussia had just received Hanover[2] at the hands

[1] It was already feared in England that the Emperor and Alexander would make peace in 1806, at the expense of the Ottoman Empire, as actually happened a year later at Tilsit.

[2] George III. of England was at the same time Elector of Hanover. To win over Prussia, but still more to make friendship between England and Prussia for ever impossible, Napoleon, who did not foresee these peaceful overtures, had, on the 15th of February, 1806, renewed with Frederick William the treaty of Schoenbrunn, which gave him Hanover.

of Napoleon, who thought that by surrendering it he was firmly attaching the country to his interests; he thus, however, put it in a very difficult position with England.[1] Nevertheless, it did not seem to Fox a sufficiently grave difficulty to prevent the signature of preliminaries with France. "The insult we have received from Prussia does not increase the difficulties of the negotiations, for we in no way complain of your behaviour in the matter. You are at war with us and it is quite proper that you should endeavour to injure us. The action of Prussia, however, must be regarded in quite a different light, for we are at peace with her, and have her most solemn declarations to that effect. We cannot but view her conduct with pain and disgust."[2]

To assuage the bitterness of their grief, and at the same time to do a good stroke of business, the English captured three hundred Prussian trading vessels.

Napoleon eagerly seized on the pretext for procrastination offered him by England, and, after a week's delay, stated that he refused to admit Russia to the negotiations for the following reasons: "When war broke out in 1803 between France and England, Russia was at peace with France, and the Emperor Alexander declared that he intended to preserve strict neutrality in the disputes between the two nations." It is impossible to follow Talleyrand in the long explanation he gives of the motives which prevent France from meeting Russia in the negotiations.

[1] Cf. George III.'s manifesto directed against Prussia on the 20th of April, 1806. F. O. R., vol. 603, fol. 38.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 50. Fox to Talleyrand, 16th April, 1806.

It is a barren discussion, full of debatable points, and a standing proof of the determination of France to gain time.[1]

Fox replied by return of post: "We wish for peace, but are allied to Russia; if we treat without her we lay ourselves open to the charge of bad faith and of failure to keep our engagements."

Starting from this reasonable standpoint he refutes the arguments contained in Talleyrand's letter of the 16th with some success, and insists on the presence of Russia during the negotiations. In his private letter Fox deplores the hitch in the preliminaries, and announces the return to France of Admiral Villeneuve, who had been defeated at Trafalgar, with his subordinates, in exchange for the liberation of the English lords by Napoleon.[2] The note shows very genuine distress, which it would be dishonest for us to conceal.

But though the Emperor did not wish to come to terms at once, he was equally unwilling to break off negotiations with England, for he was unwilling that public opinion should hold him responsible for the continuation of war. In all the negotiations he carried on up till 1814, he kept this principle clearly before him; to arrange matters in such a way as to make his opponents bear the odium for which he alone was responsible.

On the 16th of May he sent a note to Talleyrand: "If you have not yet replied to Mr. Fox, I think we

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, p. 53. Talleyrand to Fox, 16th April, 1806.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 62. Fox to Talleyrand, 21st April, 1806.

must wait another week."[1] He waited for seventeen days and at last decided that he could no longer adhere to his objections against Russia, and replied on the 2nd of June: "We are proposing to treat on these leading principles; our first is inspired by Fox's letter of the 26th of March, and is to the effect that the two States are to aim at establishing a peace that shall be honourable for them and their respective allies, and at the same time the peace is to be such as shall insure as far as possible the repose of Europe; the second principle shall provide that both Powers be recognized as possessing full rights of intervention and warranty for both land and maritime affairs."[2] Napoleon finally proposed to negotiate with the same preliminary forms as were adopted under Rockingham's ministry in 1782.[3]

The English Cabinet again showed their desire to come to terms by accepting immediately and enthusiastically the two principles laid down by France. This method of negotiating was all the more pleasing to Fox, because he had praised it when he was minister at the time of the preliminary proposals in 1782.[4]

[1] F. O. R., France, vol. 1777, fol. 26. This letter is not in the printed collection entitled *Correspondance de Napoleon* (1863).

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, p. 82. Talleyrand to Fox, 2nd June, 1806.

[3] This refers to the peace of Versailles, which was concluded between France, England, Holland and the United States of America, and which closed the war of the American Independence. England was then one against three, exactly in the position we occupied in 1806, when conducting hostilities against two Powers, but the situation was reversed.

[4] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 89. Fox to Talleyrand, 14th June, 1806.

Here Lord Seymour, Earl of Yarmouth, entered on the scene. Taken prisoner at Verdun at the outset of the war, this young lord had been released by a decision of the Emperor given on the 23rd of May, 1806, together with a certain number of his compatriots.[1] He came to Paris and hastened to visit Talleyrand, with whom he was on terms of friendship, and received from this minister the most formal assurances of the Emperor's peaceful intentions.

Being cognizant of the English minister's peaceful proposals, Lord Yarmouth only remained a few days in Paris and embarked at Morlaix for Great Britain,[2] in order to come to an understanding with Fox and to ask George III. for authorization to act on behalf of England.

The London Court lost no time, and on the 14th of June Fox wrote to Talleyrand to announce Yarmouth's speedy arrival as negotiator: "Yarmouth has my full confidence; you may treat everything he says as if said by me."

On the 17th of June, at five o'clock in the evening, Lord Yarmouth returned to Paris, accompanied by his wife, stopped at an hotel in the rue Cérutti, visited Talleyrand at once and the same evening was present at the Opera. For the next few days he would receive no one except Monsieur de Montron; but he visited those to whom he had any news to

[1] Till the 20th of June, 1806, 79 Englishmen, 132 women and 53 children had been repatriated by successive orders (F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 79). At this time there were about 820 English prisoners at Verdun.

[2] Home Office Records, F7, 3753. Police report of the 2nd of June, 1806.

communicate. Then the meetings with Talleyrand took place, and from the outset Lord Yarmouth hoped that they would be brought to a successful conclusion.[1] The newsmongers made conjectures, based on the English proposals, and Paris anticipated a speedy settlement.[2] Rumours of peace with England became more and more credited.

Still, though Talleyrand and Yarmouth had many meetings, they did not succeed in coming to an agreement about conditions of peace. Sicily was the usual topic of discussion, and proved an insurmountable obstacle to a settlement.

On the 29th of June, when Fox intrusted Yarmouth by letter with his full powers,[3] he told him that an indispensable condition of peace was, that Sicily, which was actually occupied by the English, and which was being governed by Ferdinand, the late King of Naples, was to remain in the possession of that sovereign.

Talleyrand, who at the outset had accepted the *uti possidetis* as the basis for negotiations, had said to Yarmouth in reference to Sicily, "You are in possession, and we are not asking you to surrender anything." But Napoleon, for strategic purposes and to

[1] The story of these meetings is told in detail by Monsieur Thiers, *op. cit.*, vol. vi., p. 441 *sqq*. The Foreign Office Records do not refer to them at all. Talleyrand in his memoirs, vol. i., p. 305, simply makes this report: "After two or three conferences with Yarmouth, Fox, in order to please Lord Grenville the titular chief of the Cabinet, associated Lord Lauderdale with Lord Yarmouth."

[2] Home Office Records, F7 3753. Police reports, June 18th to 30th.

[3] The text of these powers is in archaic Latin.

complete his work, wished it to be united to the kingdom of Naples under Joseph Bonaparte's rule. Consequently Talleyrand had to go back on his earlier declarations. Much annoyed, Yarmouth asked for fresh instructions, and on the 5th of July Fox replied:

"The abandonment of Sicily is a point on which it is impossible for His Majesty to concede.

"Your Lordship has already stated unanswerably to M. Talleyrand that this demand is inconsistent with his express declarations and with the whole principle on which the negotiation rests. It is besides a proposal in itself quite inadmissible."[1]

Talleyrand and Yarmouth could not come to an understanding, and the method of prolonging the negotiations pleased the Emperor too much for him not to take advantage of it. Acting under his orders, our Minister for Foreign Affairs offered the late King of Naples as compensation, first the Hanseatic towns, then Albania, Ragusa and Dalmatia. Yarmouth threatened to return at once to London if the Emperor persisted in his desire to drive Ferdinand out of Sicily. Talleyrand succeeded in persuading him to wait in patience.

In forwarding Fox these proposals of indemnity, the English negotiator also advised him of d'Oubril's arrival in Paris, with a mission to negotiate peace directly between France and Russia.[2]

On the 11th Talleyrand informed Napoleon that

[1] Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. viii., cols. 112 and 116. Fox to Yarmouth, 26th June and 5th July, 1806; and English Foreign Office Records, F. O., France, 73.

[2] Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, Yarmouth to Fox, 9th July, 1806.

CHAPTER XIII

ENGLAND GIVES WAY ON THE SICILIAN QUESTION

IT was a letter sent by d'Oubril to Fox (far more than all Talleyrand's arguments), which modified the English attitude towards the Sicilian question and made England withdraw her opposition. D'Oubril thought himself authorized to declare that the Czar would accept an indemnity for the late King of Naples in compensation for Sicily, and Count Strogonoff, the Russian minister in London, took up a similar position. This settled the Sicilian question for the English Cabinet; they were enabled to satisfy Napoleon without being defaulters in their engagements to Russia and the Sicilian dynasty. On the 18th of July Fox wrote to Yarmouth that England would abandon Sicily to Joseph if the late King of Naples would accept as indemnity, not Albania, which belonged to Turkey, but Dalmatia with a portion of Istria, and, if possible, Venice. Russia, he said, would be pleased with this settlement, for Dalmatia would thus be placed beyond the grasp of Napoleon, but he doubted whether the Emperor would accept this solution. Yarmouth was to sound Talleyrand on the matter, and to agree to co-operate with d'Oubril in undertaking the negotiations.[1]

[1] Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. viii., cols. 119 and 120. Fox to Yarmouth, 18th July, 1806.

Yarmouth was well informed of the conferences between Alexander's envoy and Talleyrand. The reader may judge for himself. The Russian envoy arrived in Paris on the 5th of July; he was ill, and unable to leave the hotel in the Rue Grange-Batelière, where he was staying. Yarmouth immediately paid him a visit, returned the next day, saw him twice on the afternoon of the 8th, and called on him during his daily walks or drives until his departure. But as Lord Yarmouth's mistress, a lady of the name of Saint-Amand, was staying in the same house as d'Oubril, the police were at first in the dark as to whether Lord Yarmouth was paying his numerous visits to her or to the Russian envoy. Doubtless they shared his visits, which were thus due on the one hand to motives of affection, and on the other, to the requirements of diplomacy. Still it is certain that on the 13th of July he remained with d'Oubril till two o'clock in the morning; and that on the 22nd, the day the Russian left, he spent the whole night with him[1] and at four o'clock in the morning saw him into the carriage which was to take him to Russia.

About the middle of July Napoleon modified his attitude towards England; he really wished to come to terms, for he was now in a position to consider the English proposals seriously; on the 5th of June, Louis had been proclaimed King of Holland, the

[1] *Archives Nationales*, F 7 3753. Police report from the 19th of June to the 22nd of July, 1806. It appears that Lady Yarmouth used to stroll late in the evening in the Champs-Elysées with a "private friend who is thought to be Monsieur de Montron." He was intimate with Lord Yarmouth's household, according to the police reports.

Rhine Confederation had been organized, and Napoleon decided to confront the English with the actual facts of the situation, and to force them to accept his definite proposals, or continue the war which should consolidate his work. But a still more cogent reason was the fact that Talleyrand had just signed a treaty of peace with d'Oubril (21st July).

The conclusion of this treaty, which had been arranged by taking advantage of d'Oubril's weakness[1] and his immoderate haste, was far from helping to bring about a good understanding with England, who was unwilling to treat except in conjunction with St. Petersburg. Yarmouth had tried to curb d'Oubril's impatience; on the eve of the conclusion of the treaty he had insisted on seeing him, and had made him a final appeal, but in vain.[2]

In fact, this treaty arranged for the cession of Sicily to Joseph; the Prince Royal of Naples was to obtain the Balearic Isles in exchange, and the deposed King and Queen were to receive pecuniary compensation.

For the last four months, Napoleon had been playing with the English, with the object of coming to an arrangement with the Czar. He supposed that that monarch would be glad to ratify the agreement entered into by d'Oubril, and that the English, again confronted with the facts of the situation, would yield on

[1] Metternich, in his *Memoirs*, vol. i., p. 32, imagines that he could have modified d'Oubril's arrangements. "If I had only arrived at Paris in time, my influence would have effectually prevented this young and inexperienced negotiator from compromising himself in a way that was afterwards so mortifying for him."

[2] Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. viii. Yarmouth to Fox, 20th July, 1806.

the Sicilian question. The ratification of the treaty seemed to him all the more likely, because Article 9 stated that France was accepting the good offices of Russia to make peace with England. This marked condescension to the Emperor Alexander, who would thus assume the part of an arbitrator was, he thought, certain to flatter the Prince and secure his consent to the treaty.

But this was hardly the way to come to an amicable settlement with England, whose pride would be offended because a treaty had been made without her participation, and because what was virtually an alliance had been concluded between France and Russia against England. Still, events seemed to a certain extent to justify the Emperor's prognostications. The London Cabinet concealed their annoyance, complained that a treaty had been entered into without their knowledge, but showed afresh the desire to come to an agreement with us. As a matter of fact, Fox censured Yarmouth for having shown his powers too soon, as he should only have done so after having agreed with Talleyrand about the main provisions of the peace, which had not been decided on by the 20th of July. He expressed great regret about the treaty with Russia, but after all, as the King of England was thus released from any contract with the Czar, he was now free to consider only his own interests in coming to an agreement. To bring about this end, Yarmouth asked Talleyrand for a passport for a fully accredited negotiator, who should be authorized to conclude peace at Paris.[1]

[1] Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. viii., cols. 130 and 131, Fox to Yarmouth, 26th July, 1806.

This negotiator was Lord Lauderdale.

In his heart of hearts the Emperor did not anticipate that the negotiations would be successful; on the 15th of July he wrote to Joseph, "I do not think that the negotiations with England will come to anything. She has determined that the late King of Naples shall keep Sicily. I cannot agree to this proposal."[1] Three weeks previously he had said: "The English are willing to recognize you as King of Naples, but without Sicily they will refuse to recognize you. Peace could be made, if you were master of Sicily."[2]

We have seen that the English, contrary to Napoleon's expectations, had a few days later compromised the Sicilian question.

As Napoleon could not indefinitely postpone the nomination of a plenipotentiary to discuss terms with Lord Yarmouth, he appointed General Clarke to the post the day after he had signed the treaty with d'Oubril, thus affecting to consider that negotiations were only then being really opened with England.[3]

We may note in passing that since the 1st of April no definite proposal of conditions of peace had been made by the Emperor; all negotiations had been conducted verbally between Talleyrand and Yarmouth, and were summed up in a series of dull letters between Talleyrand and Fox.

Was it likely that the appointment of General Clarke would bring the negotiations to a satisfactory conclu-

[1] Napoleon's Correspondence, vol. xiii., 10490.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. xiii., 10395, 21st June, 1806.

[3] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 103. Letter appointing Clarke plenipotentiary.

sion? A note from the plenipotentiary affords some indications of their progress:

"It appears that Yarmouth is unwilling to forward a despatch without showing it to Talleyrand. He wants to write a bare announcement to the effect that I have been appointed to conduct negotiations, and to ask for special instructions about the Balearic Isles. I think we are to have Surinam, but there is a difficulty about Pondicherry. If M. Talleyrand wishes to see me he must do so at once, for I am off to Saint-Cloud to try to obtain consent for the alteration of the number of troops that are to be stationed at Pondicherry, though I shall probably be unsuccessful. Send me word by Mallet."[1]

In sending Lord Lauderdale to Paris for the definite purpose of signing the peace, the English Cabinet showed clearly that they wished to give the negotiations a more official and a more serious character than in the past. It has been said that Fox feared to see Yarmouth, a personal friend of Talleyrand, succumb to his influence and be circumvented like d'Oubril, and therefore sent him Lauderdale as a "corrective."[2]

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 105. Clarke to Talleyrand, 24th July, 1806.

[2] Armand Lefebre, *Histoire des Cabinets de l'Europe de* 1800 *à* 1815, vol. ii., p. 337. "In sending Lord Lauderdale, the English Cabinet wished to check Yarmouth's peaceful leanings, and from that moment desired a resumption of war." The documents that the reader will see quoted fail to confirm this assertion either. Moreover Lord Lauderdale's history is proof of his sincere wish to promote peace. Owing to his stay in France in 1792, and his friendship with Brissot, he had a remarkable affection for France, and resolutely supported a peace policy in Parliament. His efforts between 1803 and 1806 were

Lord Lauderdale's instructions, dated the 2nd of August, 1806, a copy of which we owe to the courtesy of the Foreign Office, show that this theory is quite untenable.[1] Their great interest warrants their insertion:

"The original basis on which the negotiation was begun, is, therefore, that to which your Lordship must constantly revert, and on which your stand must ultimately be taken.

"It may, however, be remarked to you by the French Government—and it is unquestionably true—that a negotiation carried on upon the basis of *uti possidetis* does not exclude the consideration of exchanges to be made by mutual agreement, and on terms reciprocally just and equal.

"It was on that footing alone that His Majesty ever consented to consider the question whether such an equivalent could be offered for Sicily, as His Sicilian Majesty might fairly be expected to accept by his own full and free consent, for the great object of restoring peace to Europe.

"The compensation provided for this purpose in the Russian treaty, is manifestly inadequate in all respects. It becomes still more so when attended with the limitation last proposed by France, that Spanish troops only should be allowed to garrison the new

marked with excessive violence, and it was for that reason that he was not selected as a representative Scotch peer. He returned to favour when Fox resumed power in January, 1806. Lord Lauderdale was remarkably capable in dealing with questions of finance, and wrote several works on this subject. According to his biography he appears to have had a violent character, to have been a fluent talker, eccentric but refined.

[1] On the request of M. Paul Cambon, French ambassador in London.

dominions of that Sovereign; and it is aggravated by fresh indignity, when it is proposed to transfer that crown from His Sicilian Majesty to his son, and to cause His Sicilian Majesty's 'existence,' as it is insultingly termed, to be provided for by a pension at the charge of this country.

"His Majesty is not bound to His Sicilian Majesty by the terms of any treaty which would prevent him from withdrawing his troops from Sicily, if such an arrangement for peace were offered as in his judgement His Sicilian Majesty could reasonably be expected to accept. But the sense which His Majesty entertains of what is due to the general principles of justice, to the implied engagements which result from the relative state of this country and Sicily, and to the honour and dignity of his crown, must for ever prevent his contributing by any step on his part to so injurious an arrangement as that which has been thus proposed.

"Nor can he in justice to his own dominions acquiesce in measures which make no provision for the sacrifice of the interests which this country has in keeping Sicily out of the hands of France. It would therefore, at all events, be manifestly necessary that some farther compensation should be provided by France for His Sicilian Majesty, particularly in the way of revenue, before the cession of that island could be consented to. The idea of deposing him and substituting the Prince Royal in his place, cannot be admitted even as a subject of discussion on any other ground than that of His Sicilian Majesty's own consent.

"If France is still desirous of obtaining Sicily by exchange, it is for her to make some new offer for this purpose, either in the mode which will be mentioned below or in some other shape.

"The evacuation of Sicily must, however, be also

made dependent, in every event, on the execution of the other articles of peace between His Majesty and France, and on the adoption of certain principles which His Majesty would feel himself bound to stipulate for in such a case, with respect to the defence of Sardinia, of the Balearic Isles, and of any other territories forming part of the Sicilian compensation. The protection of all these dominions must incontestably, under any such arrangement, rest exclusively with His Majesty, who could alone maintain their independence even for an hour, against the dangerous neighbourhood of France.

"Far, therefore, from consenting that Spanish troops alone shall be employed there, His Majesty would require that those sovereignties should be distinctly placed under the guaranty and protection of Great Britain, and that His Majesty should be at liberty, without derogating from the treaty, to make such arrangements with those princes for the defence and garrison of their dominions as should be mutually agreed upon between themselves.

"A demand, on the justice and necessity of which it is needless to dwell, to which France, under the circumstances of the federative system she is establishing on the Continent, could have no pretence to object, and which is sanctioned by the actual state of things in Sicily, for which these compensations are offered.

"If these points were adjusted it would remain to be considered in what any such further compensation could consist.

"With respect to Corsica, which has been mentioned in this view in some of Lord Yarmouth's letters, it does not seem desirable to press that point, it not appearing likely to produce any real benefit to His Sicilian Majesty's interests.

"As to Sardinia no proposal can be accepted here

for putting that island into His Sicilian Majesty's hands. The sovereignty of that island must, on the contrary, be guaranteed to its present King, with such arrangement for its defence as is above stated. The idea of placing the Hanse Towns under His Sicilian Majesty's dominion is equally inadmissible, and appears indeed to have been withdrawn by France. The independence of those towns must be recognized and guaranteed by both parties.

"The augmentation of His Sicilian Majesty's indemnity must, therefore, if the negotiation should take that course, be found, as far as we can conjecture, in South America or in the West Indies. It is in this view alone that the question of restoring Ste-Lucie, Tobago, or any of the Dutch Settlements in South America, can be entertained. These conquests are clearly included in the general principle of *uti possidetis*. His Majesty, who, according to all reasonable probability, is able to retain them against any efforts on the part of France, cannot be expected to surrender any of them as the price of a peace which must necessarily leave the Continent so much at the disposal of France. None of them could therefore be ceded by His Majesty except on some principle of fair equivalent, either to himself or to his ally.

"With respect indeed to Tobago and Ste-Lucie, which are coupled together in the French demand, it is to be observed that these two Possessions are not considered here as of equal value or standing on the same ground. Ste-Lucie being originally a French island, Tobago an English one, settled and inhabited entirely by British subjects, whom it cannot be expected that His Majesty should abandon when treating on a principle of *uti possidetis*, which was offered to him by the enemy, and by the operation of which their interests would be secured.

"On the grounds, therefore, which are here stated,

you are at liberty to accept and refer for consideration any proposals that shall be stated to you by France.

"The demand of Gorée is perhaps not of sufficient consequence to obstruct the conclusion of peace, except as a departure from the original principle of negotiation.

"That of Pondicherry can by no means be acceded to; the proposal of France to limit her garrison there is of no value whatever. In war Pondicherry must of necessity fall into our hands, as there can be no danger that France will attempt to maintain a garrison there equal to the whole force of our Indian Empire.

"It is in peace alone that this Possession would be dangerous to us, from the opportunity it would afford for the renewal of such projects and measures as have, in former periods of peace, been pursued by France to undermine the British Power in India.

"The demand of a similar limitation for Malta carries with it no reciprocity. The King now holds Malta and can augment its garrison at his pleasure. France is deprived of Pondicherry and cannot hope to recover it by arms.

"If, therefore, no acceptable plan of exchanges should be proposed by France, either with a view to His Majesty's interests or those of His Sicilian Majesty, the terms of peace between Great Britain and France must then stand on their original basis, that of the *uti possidetis* with the restitution of Hanover, and even on this part it is essential to remark, that while France still professes fully to adhere to her original offer on this point, she had at one moment suggested arrangements by which the county of Hoya, a valuable part of the Electoral Dominions, was to remain to Prussia.

"The integrity of Sweden, Spain and Portugal must

of course be guaranteed by the two Powers to each other as was originally proposed, and on these terms His Majesty would consent that the other changes which have taken place in Europe should be mutually recognized.

"These instructions are to be considered as stating the decided sentiments of this Government, from which it will not depart. And if your Lordship shall be unable to obtain terms of peace, grounded on these principles, or to persuade France to propose others of equal advantage to this country, you are not to accept of any proposal less advantageous, but to declare your mission terminated; all motive for delay on the part of this country ceased when the Russian peace was signed, and procrastination would now only give fresh ground of advantage to the enemy.

"If, on the contrary, there should appear a disposition on the part of France to close with any of these suggestions, or with others of a similar description, your Lordship's language will, of course, be regulated by your expectations in this respect; and you will not fail to give every practicable facility for the restoration of peace, an object which His Majesty has much at heart, and which he thinks is best consulted by your Lordship being enabled to state at once the full extent of concessions which His Majesty thinks practicable, and to resist with firmness the continually increasing demands of the enemy."

These instructions show a sincere wish to arrive at a settlement. England was allowing Napoleon to keep Sicily, and, in short, only claimed a suitable indemnity for the deposed monarch; let us admit that the offer of the Balearic Isles was ridiculous; England proposed to find compensation in America and not in Europe, a proposal that would have very considerably sim-

plified the question at issue, for Spain was no longer strong enough to raise her voice in defence of her patrimony in the New World. But Napoleon did not wish to weaken Spain, on which he had already formed designs, but had determined to find compensation for Ferdinand of Sicily in Europe. It was an annoying policy, and led to the failure of the negotiations in 1806. In their real meaning, Lord Lauderdale's instructions do not differ from those contained in Fox's letter to Yarmouth on the 18th of July; they rather confirm them in that they are more definite; we must therefore give up the idea that Lord Lauderdale was meant to act as a "corrective" to Lord Yarmouth.

As a friend of Fox, a determined Whig, and a supporter of peace with France, Lord Lauderdale brought a greater formality and more stiffness into the conferences than Lord Yarmouth, but there was no change in the general conduct of affairs. It may be allowed that his characteristically British stiffness was somewhat unfavourable to the smoothness of the negotiations, but Count d'Hauterive is over-severe when he calls Lauderdale "a mere puppet, utterly lacking in judgment and intelligence," and reproaches him with having conducted "inconsequent negotiations by means of a hopelessly chaotic correspondence."[1]

[1] F. O. R., England, Supplement, vol. xxi., fol. 119, 29th November, 1806. Report of Count d'Hauterive, head of the First Office for Foreign Affairs.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ENGLISH PROPOSALS OF THE 31ST OF JULY, 1806

LORD LAUDERDALE, who was received at Calais with unanimous manifestations of sympathy, reached Paris on the 5th of August, and immediately notified the French Government of his powers. On the following day he had his first interview with Clarke, to whom Champagny, the Minister of the Interior, had been appointed colleague.

On the 7th of August Lauderdale and Yarmouth forwarded a note to the French plenipotentiaries, which began as follows:

"The King of England, having found that circumstances (the peace signed with d'Oubril on the 20th of July) allowed him to treat separately with France, was much pleased to receive a proposal to treat generally on the basis of *uti possidetis*, which was to be scrupulously observed, except in the case of Hanover, which it was proposed to cede entirely to his Majesty. . . . The undersigned declares that he cannot consent to treat on any other terms than those of *uti possidetis, as originally proposed by France. The adoption of this principle will not prevent the consideration of a just and satisfactory compensation to be made to his Sicilian Majesty in exchange for the cession of Sicily.* It is true that peace between Russia and France has been concluded since the proposal by France of this basis for

the negotiations; if the principle appeared just and reasonable before, in the present instance it cannot fail to be still more favourable to the interests of France than to those of the British Empire."[1]

This note gave a partial sanction to a treaty of twenty open and eight secret clauses, proposed by Yarmouth and handed to the Emperor on the 31st of July by Champagny.[2]

This proposal is among the records of the Foreign Office in Paris; it is a document of very great interest, for it enunciates the conditions on which the English had resolved to make peace in August, 1806, and which Napoleon refused to accept at once, although it satisfied his expressed desires. The reason for this will appear later. Napoleon's general correspondence[3] contains a copy of it. It is attached to a note from Napoleon to Talleyrand, which we shall mention later, and is stated to have come from the London Foreign Office. Its authenticity, therefore, cannot be doubted.

This proposal, however, figures neither in the account of the negotiations with England, published by Napoleon in the *Moniteur* on the 26th of November, 1806, nor in that of the 15th of December, 1810, which deals with the same subject. It is easy to see the cause of the omission. The Emperor was unwilling to allow that he had refused to sign so advantageous a treaty at once. None of Napoleon's historians men-

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 122.

[2] *Archives Nationales*, AF iv 1673. Champagny to the Emperor, 31st July, 1806.

[3] Correspondence, vol. xiv., 10604. Napoleon to Talleyrand, 6th August, 1806.

tions this document, despite its great importance. The English Cabinet, too, concealed it when, on the 22nd of December, 1806, they published the documents dealing with these negotiations.[1] It was, in fact, impossible for the Ministers to recognize, in presence of the English Parliament, that they had for two months in vain offered France such advantageous conditions, especially as Fox was then dead.

In the important debates in the House of Commons on the 2nd and 5th of January, 1807, on the French negotiations, no allusion was made to this proposal; but when the discussion was opened in the House of Lords, Lord Grenville stated that the documents submitted to the House were incomplete, adding that the whole could not be made public without doing injury to the English nation and the allies; for motives of national safety the instructions sent to Lords Yarmouth and Lauderdale were also withheld. We have seen that they were in accordance with the arrangements contained in this proposal.

But sixty years later it became possible to publish what could not be published in 1806, and that is why Napoleon's correspondence contains the proposed treaty of the 31st of July, 1806, according to the statement issued by the English Foreign Office.

It is convenient to mention here the clauses of this proposed treaty. The first three articles deal with the cessation of hostilities and the exchange of prisoners. Articles 4 and 5 are the most important.

Art. 4. In view of recent events, and of the fact

[1] Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. viii., from the 15th December, 1806, to the 4th March, 1807, printed in 1807, col. 92 *sqq.*, 259 *sqq.*

that the late reigning family at Naples and Sicily are to obtain other dominions, the high contracting parties shall unite and come to an agreement about the reinstatement of this family.

Art. 5. His Majesty the King of England shall recognize Prince Joseph Napoleon of France as King of the Two Sicilies, Prince Louis Napoleon as King of Holland, the Kings of Etruria, Bavaria, Wurtemburg, the Grand Dukes of Baden, Cleves, Hesse Darmstadt, the Prince of Neufchâtel, and all such arrangements as have been notified as made by France in Italy up to this day.

(This was the ratification offered by England of all the Napoleonic conquests, of the Rhine Confederation, and of all the settlements for the princes of his family.)

Art. 6. His Majesty the Emperor shall recognize His Majesty the King of England as sovereign of Hanover and of all the possessions he enjoyed before the present war.

Art. 7. The present treaty shall concern the King of Spain, the Kings of the Two Sicilies, Holland, Sweden, Etruria and the princes indicated in Article 5.

Art. 8. The King of England shall restore to the Emperor and the King of Holland all the possessions that belonged to them, with the exception of the Cape of Good Hope.

Art. 10. The integrity of the dominions of His Majesty the King of Sweden shall be maintained.

Art. 11. Restoration shall be made to the contracting parties of their possessions lost in consequence of the fortunes of war, at the moment of the signature of the present treaty or subsequently thereto.

Art. 12. Each contracting party shall guarantee to the other the absolute independence of the Ottoman Empire.

Art. 13. The Maltese order shall be dissolved, and the Emperor shall no longer oppose the retention of the islands of Malta, Gozo and Camino by England, in full ownership.

Art. 14. In the name of the Two Sicilies the Emperor shall renounce all rights of sovereignty over Malta, Gozo and Camino.

Art. 15. The King of England shall undertake that the English garrison at Malta do not exceed three thousand men; the boats of the Barbary Powers shall not be admitted to the islands of Malta, Gozo and Camino when they are at war with France or the Two Sicilies.

Art. 16. The French garrison at Pondicherry shall not exceed three thousand men.

Art. 17. The Republic of the Seven Isles shall be recognized as a sovereign state (Ionian Islands).

Art. 18. The Emperor shall undertake that no attack be made on the independence and integrity of Switzerland, governed by the act of mediation of...

Art. 19. The territories of the Most Faithful King (Portugal) shall be maintained in their integrity, such as they were in virtue of the treaty existing between France and Portugal.

Art. 20. The ratifications shall be made in the month, etc., etc.

Secret Articles.—The first Article alone has any real importance.

The Emperor and the Czar had undertaken to secure from the court of Madrid the cession of the Balearic

Isles to the Prince Royal, the son of Ferdinand IV., who, with his heirs and successors, was to enjoy them with the title of King in compensation for Naples and Sicily. The King of England offers no opposition to this arrangement, which he promises to regard as good and valid; it is, moreover, agreed that the future King of the Balearic Isles shall not be able to receive any troops, other than Spanish troops,[1] in these islands either in times of peace or war.

Article 2 confers the title of King of Hanover on the King of England.

Art. 3. The Emperor and the King of England shall make a joint effort to secure to the King of Prussia the grant of a territorial indemnity in Germany, which shall comprise a population of 400,000 souls in exchange for Cleves, Anspach and Neufchâtel.

Article 4 deals with the pensions to be paid by England to the knights of Malta out of the revenues of the island.

Art. 5. The King of England, as proof of his friendly intentions towards France, declares that he has resolved to forbid the members of the Bourbon family to enter England proper, and in case his court should go to Ireland or Scotland, the members of this family shall not be permitted to approach within forty English miles of the Court.

Art. 6. The King of England declares that it is his intention not to allow in his European dominions, but to settle in Canada, the principal ex-Chouans

[1] This article is in contradiction to Lauderdale's instructions, but we may suppose that Fox, in his desire to conclude peace at any price, would have finally given his consent to this arrangement.

whose names may be brought to his notice by the French Government.

Article 7 contains the engagement entered into by both parties to prevent in their dominions the use of invectives, personalities and statements that might be injurious to their respective States, whether published in periodicals or in any written form whatsoever.

Art. 8. The provision of Article . . . shall apply to any of the subjects of his Britannic Majesty in Germany who may wish to leave their country within three years.

These proposals which were presented, as we have said, by Yarmouth during the last few days of July, were sent back by the Emperor to Talleyrand on the 6th of August, with a note to the effect that in form they still appeared to be far from perfect. He had added some marginal notes, claiming the suppression of Article 4, which was in his eyes a useless repetition of Article 5; of the mention of the King of Etruria and the Prince of Neufchâtel in Article 5, and of the arrangements made in Italy, on the pretext that there was no more reason for the English to concern themselves with the affairs of Italy than for his Majesty to interfere in the government of India.[1]

It is obvious that Napoleon, though anxious to discuss the form of some of the clauses, accepted the main principles of the settlement. It could not be otherwise, for they involved the cession of Sicily to Joseph, the restitution of the Dutch colonies with the

[1] Napoleon's Correspondence, vol. xiv., 10640. Observations to Talleyrand on the treaty of peace with England, 6th August, 1806.

exception of the Cape, and, in a word, fully satisfied Napoleon's ambition. This treaty should have been concluded as soon as possible with Lord Lauderdale, who, as we have shown above, had reached Paris about noon on the previous day, the 5th of August.[1]

The note sent by the two English diplomats on the 7th (*v.* p. 109) seemed to them the necessary corollary to the projected treaty, for it emphasized the numerous advantages conceded to France, and above all the favourable attitude of the English Cabinet in their dealings with the Bourbons, the Chouans, and the journalists.

One is amazed at reading the reply made by Napoleon on the following day to the English note, and at discovering the motives he advances, for avoiding for a moment the conclusion of an agreement so favourable to France. In diffuse and cumbrous language he denies that France ever accepted the principle of the *uti possidetis*, quibbles about the terms of the projected treaty, and concludes in these words: "His Majesty considers the bare idea of negotiations based on the *uti possidetis* as dishonourable, and confines himself to the two principles explained in M. de Talleyrand's letter to Mr. Fox, dated the 2nd of June."[2]

How could it be dishonourable for France to enter into negotiations with England, based on the actual possessions occupied by her in August, 1806, when she had conquered Holland, Italy, and Naples, when she was dominating Germany by the Rhine Confedera-

[1] *Archives Nationales*, Fvii 3753, 6th August, 1806.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 126. Clarke to Lauderdale, 8th August, 1806. *Vide supra*, p. 91, Talleyrand's reply to Fox, 2nd June.

tion, and when finally the English offered her Sicily in exchange for a group of islands belonging to Spain? Almost all treaties that have ever been made have been concluded after negotiations based on the principle of the *uti possidetis*, and no one has ever before thought of considering such a basis dishonourable.

In his note of the 8th Napoleon expressed regret, that written notes had passed between the negotiators; exclusively verbal conferences did in fact afford greater facilities for protracting debates and left no traces behind them.[1] But Lauderdale, who wished to bring the negotiations to a conclusion, partly from motives of pride, and also because he feared that Fox, who was then lying ill of an affection of the liver, might die before their completion, resisted the Emperor's wishes, and continued to make use of written notes.

The next day, the 9th, he wrote to Clarke: "With all due deference, I submit that the request to make *uti possidetis* the basis for negotiations was suggested by the words used by M. de Talleyrand to Lord Yarmouth." These words were: "We are asking you for nothing." This phrase was accompanied by assurances that the restitution of his Majesty's German possessions would not meet with any opposition. The same sentiment is again expressed in the letter from M. de Talleyrand to Fox of the 1st of April, which contains this expression: "The Emperor can desire nothing that is in England's occupation."

[1] It is a most fortunate circumstance, for nothing has remained of the verbal conferences, and without written notes preserved in the Foreign Office Records it would be impossible to assign any responsibility.

Lauderdale did not know what to think; Napoleon's bad faith seemed clearly established, and so he asked for his passport, because Napoleon refused to base his negotiations on a principle that had been accepted at the outset.

CHAPTER XV

A COMEDY IN THE HISTORY OF DIPLOMACY

THE negotiations now began to savour of comedy. The Emperor did not reply to Lauderdale's note of the 9th of August; the English plenipotentiary confirmed it, and requested a passport for a messenger he wished to send to London. On the 11th the English representative entered an energetic protest against the violation of international law, which for three days had prevented him from holding any communication with his Government. That was just what the Emperor wanted. By preventing Lauderdale from communicating with London he was gaining time; he had determined not to sign the treaty proposed by England until the treaty of the 20th of July, which had been concluded with d'Oubril, had been ratified by the Czar. Now it was impossible for a Russian messenger to reach Paris with a confirmation of the treaty before the 20th of August, at the earliest. The Emperor's decision is inexplicable. For even supposing that the Czar had refused to ratify d'Oubril's treaty, the Emperor could, by signing an agreement with Lauderdale on the 10th, have secured the peace of Europe, and in that case the Czar would have been confronted with stern facts, and have had to withdraw his refusal to ratify the treaty. The absurd comedy, however, was

to last another ten days, even supposing that the Czar replied at once, and that the messenger met with no delay.

On the evening of the 11th, Talleyrand condescended to forward a passport for Lord Lauderdale's messenger, and declared "that he was not at all afraid of assuming responsibility for any delay which continued to inspire him with hopes of a general peace."[1]

In point of fact the two English diplomatists were prisoners, as they themselves realized; but in the hope of avoiding an outburst, which would have made any arrangement impossible, they resigned themselves to their fate.

The Emperor, unable any longer to reject the basis of the *uti possidetis*, which he had himself but recently proposed, because it was eminently favourable to him, suddenly stated on the evening of the 11th, that he would accept it, "because he found that it was in agreement with the principles laid down in the letter of March the 26th to Fox, and in Talleyrand's letter of the 2nd of June," conditionally on England allowing the system of compensation.[2] These were the exact principles suggested by the English in their proposed treaty, though quite the opposite of what the Emperor had written to Lauderdale four days previously. It would be hard to find a parallel in history to so unconcerned and obvious a contradiction.

Lord Lauderdale received this letter on the evening of the 11th, and replied at once that he was satisfied with the Emperor's decision in the matter of the *uti possidetis* and was eager to discuss the proposed treaty.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 138.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. 603, fol. 139, Clarke to Lauderdale.

On the 12th,[1] he dined with Talleyrand and had a long conference with him; probably the French Minister displayed his wonted charm and persuaded him to wait patiently, for on the next day the Englishman wrote him the following note:

"After the frank and friendly conversation that Lord Lauderdale had yesterday with M. de Talleyrand, he cannot but express his regrets that the grave differences of opinion between the French and English courts leave him but little hope that he may enjoy such charming society for as long as he would desire."[2]

Talleyrand forwarded this letter to Clarke, and begged him to ask the Emperor for orders.

After seeing Napoleon, the general replied in a characteristic letter:

"I saw the Emperor this morning; he was pleased with the details which I gave him, but as he considers that the crisis is not yet sufficiently developed, he wishes you to continue to play a waiting game and to gain time. My sincere respects to His Highness the Prince of Benevento. CLARKE.[3]

"Paris, August 13th, 1806. 1 p.m."

On the 14th, Lauderdale, uneasy at not having received any answer to the note he had forwarded on the morning of the 12th, sent a further letter, and on

[1] Two days previously a curious scene had been enacted at Lord Lauderdale's. An agent of the Bourbons had stolen into his room and made him proposals. He was promptly shown out. *Archives Nationales*, Fvii 3753, Police Report, 11th August, 1806.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 148.

[3] *Ibid.*, fol. 147.

being persuaded that the French Government was unwilling to enter into any further discussions, he again demanded his passport.

The festivals of the 15th of August naturally prevented any further communications taking place. On the 17th the negotiator demanded a passport for Lord Yarmouth. Disgusted with Napoleon's delays, Yarmouth had requested his Government to recall him, and George III. had shown himself very ready to grant his request. "The letter of recall is couched in terms which show the utmost consideration for France, and the motive assigned is the extreme character of the views he holds."[1]

Napoleon sent Yarmouth his passport without delay. The presence of a single plenipotentiary was all he required; the reply from Russia was expected every hour, and if it were in accordance with the Emperor's views, Lauderdale would still be there to sign peace. But no messenger arrived. Five days passed and on the 22nd Lauderdale, in view of the silence preserved since the 11th by the French Government, repeated his request that a passport should be sent him for his personal use. On the 25th he showed indignation, and with sufficient cause:

"The unbroken silence of Their Excellencies the French plenipotentiaries and His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs, despite the letters and notes forwarded them on the 11th, 14th, and 22nd of this month by the undersigned, seems to show clearly that the French Government has given up all desire for peace on the basis which it had itself already proposed

[1] *Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1673. Talleyrand to Napoleon, 16th August, 1806. Lord Yarmouth left Paris on the 22nd.

and which the undersigned has consistently regarded as the only possible basis on which he was authorized to treat with the French Government."[1]

The British negotiator was wrong in saying that Napoleon had no longer any desire to treat. He still wished to do so on the 25th of August. His letter of the 10th to Talleyrand is proof of the fact,[2] as well as that of the 22nd, in which he says: "However, I can see no objection to the ministers giving a reply next Monday and requesting that a conference be called to discuss the means of arriving at a definite result."[3]

In pursuance of these instructions Lauderdale was invited to a conference on the 26th of August to be followed by a dinner. Clarke and Champagny were to allow England the possession of Malta, the Cape, and Dutch America, but were to claim the restoration of Surinam. If this were refused, they were to ask in exchange for the direct union of Holland to France, and the establishment of French Customs Houses in that country. In fact, they were ordered to enter into many discussions, and, above all, to protract the negotiations.[4] As might have been expected, the question was discussed without the attainment of any result, and they separated on the understanding that they would meet again on the 29th.

[1] Alluding to his letter of the 7th of August and to the proposed treaty, F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 172.

[2] F. O. R., France, Memoirs and Documents, vol. 1777, fol. 97, and Napoleon's Correspondence, vol. xix., 10662.

[3] Napoleon's Correspondence, vol. xiv., 10683, Letter to Talleyrand.

[4] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 176. Instructions to the French plenipotentiaries on the 26th of August, 1806.

On the 27th Lauderdale dined with Talleyrand, and had a long conversation with him, in the course of which he admitted that he did not expect Russia to confirm the treaty signed on the 20th of July by d'Oubril. This was also Talleyrand's opinion, as expressed in a letter to Napoleon, dated the 27th, when he also added, that in his opinion it would be impossible to make peace with England if Russia refused to ratify the treaty.[1] This, however, was only the private opinion of a minister who was more remarkable for his fickleness than for the accuracy of his views.

Napoleon decided to utilize the conference fixed for the 29th of August to discuss what means should be employed to induce Prussia to restore Hanover to England. Nothing could have been more agreeable to Lauderdale or could have better served to prolong the discussion until the arrival of the messenger from Russia. The plenipotentiaries were also to consider the compensation which should be granted to King Ferdinand of Naples for the loss of Sicily, as the cession of this island to Joseph was closely related with that of Hanover to England. Finally there was to be a digression on such incidental questions as the treatment of the colonies, and others calculated to attract Lauderdale's fullest attention.[2]

The Emperor's orders were carried out to the letter in a long and friendly conference. Every solution

[1] P. Bertrand, *op. cit.*, p. 247. According to this letter Lord Yarmouth was still in Paris on the 30th of August, and was continuing his negotiations, while, according to the Police Reports, he left on the 22nd.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 192. Instructions to the French plenipotentiaries, 28th August, 1806.

corresponded so well with the English offers contained in the proposed treaty, that the British negotiator, delighted at the changed attitude of the French plenipotentiaries, willingly entered into these discussions, and, in the hopes of a favourable solution, consented to a fresh conference for the 4th of September.[1]

A few days previously a painful incident had occurred which estranged the two Governments. An English squadron was cruising off the mouth of the Gironde, and a boat from the "Revenge" was sent to aid in the capture of a convoy. The crew was taken prisoner by the French, and one of the sailors who were manning the boat was brought before the Council of War, condemned to death and shot, under pretext of his being a Frenchman. Lauderdale considered this incident a most unhappy omen and an indication of Napoleon's hostile intentions. He addressed him a strong note on the subject and produced documents to show that the sailor was an Englishman. As might have been anticipated, the matter went no further, but Talleyrand was of opinion that

"Lord Lauderdale's indignation about the sailor who had been shot and the fuss he had made in the matter were only what one had to expect from a man who had been all his life a frequenter of clubs and a Parliamentary agitator, and who was consequently not aware that an event which leads to a violent scene between two parties is usually only a misunderstanding which could at once be cleared up in the light of more definite intelligence and of a temperate explanation."[2]

[1] Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. viii. Lauderdale to Fox, 30th August, 1806.

[2] P. Bertrand, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

In fairness we must add that Talleyrand was as much out of touch with Lord Lauderdale as he was in sympathy with Lord Yarmouth.

On the evening of the conference of the 29th of August, to which we have referred above, Talleyrand sent a remarkable letter to the Emperor:

"The plenipotentiaries," he wrote, "have had a long conference with Lord Lauderdale; the result is that it is to be continued next Thursday (4th September). Lord Lauderdale, who is at the present moment in my house, seems to have power to conclude peace on the basis he has proposed [*i.e.*, the proposals offered to Napoleon on the 31st of July], or on some similar basis. He appears to attach considerable importance to the payment of an indemnity to King Ferdinand, and to be far less interested in Santa-Lucia and Gorée than in the other French and Dutch possessions. He seems quite indifferent about the question of Dutch independence."[1]

We may therefore state that at the beginning of September the English Cabinet was still in favour of the proposed treaty, with all the advantages it gave us, though fully aware that the Russian Emperor would not ratify the treaty signed by d'Oubril. Yet Napoleon, who was beginning to suspect that the delay in the Czar's reply was but the prelude to a refusal, omitted to take advantage of England's offer and at once to sign the treaty of peace with Lauderdale.

[1] *Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1673. Talleyrand to Napoleon, 29th August, 1806.

CHAPTER XVI

INDIGNATION OF THE EMPEROR

ON the 3rd of September the Russian messenger arrived. The Czar had refused to ratify the convention entered into by d'Oubril on the 20th of July. The news made the Emperor furious. His rage was terrible, and caused the upset of all the plans he had made for peace. In his eyes the refusal of Russia to accept the treaty could only mean that she wished for the continuation of war. Napoleon refused to consider anything but a struggle to the death, and as it was impossible to treat with England while at war with Russia, the negotiations with Lauderdale were to be broken off. It was not enough to have two enemies to fight; Prussia, whose treacherous conduct since the treaty of Schoenbrunn, and whose preparation of armaments had been exciting the Emperor's distrust, was to receive the first blows of chastisement. He would have it that Russia's action had been taken in concert with Prussia and England, and that England had never seriously wished for peace.

On the 3rd of September Talleyrand asked for instructions, and even outdid the Emperor in his suppositions. "It is now quite clear," he wrote to the Emperor, "that England will not make peace. It is evident that Russia has arrived at her decisions in

concert with Grenville's party. It would seem that there have never before been such important communications passing between England and Russia, or such intimate relations as there are to-day."[1]

Without reflecting on the consequences that such an action must entail on the subsequent negotiations, Napoleon struck a blow at the enemy he could reach, who was Lord Lauderdale. He sent him a storming letter,[2] in which he made an attack on his personal character, and accused him of having given an unexpected turn to the discussion which had hitherto been conducted so smoothly. "The visits which were due in view of their respective positions had not been paid by Lauderdale, and yet his demands for passports were hourly repeated, while the requests made by the Emperor's ministers for an explanation were made in vain." The Emperor remarked on the unconventionality of the imperious—one might almost say barbarous—methods he had not shrunk from adopting. "It is quite impossible to conclude peace with a plenipotentiary whose every word is an insult, and whose every move is an act of hostility." Consequently Talleyrand received orders to send Lord Lauderdale the passport he had so persistently requested.

[1] *Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1674. Talleyrand to Napoleon, 3rd September, 1806.

[2] This letter does not appear in Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, and Lauderdale makes no allusion to it in his letters to the Cabinet; or, if he did mention it, the Cabinet suppressed it when publishing the documents dealing with the negotiations. On the other hand, Napoleon was not ashamed to publish the letter in the *Moniteur* of the 26th of November, and so it was known in England.

Before closing his remarks Napoleon again referred to Lord Lauderdale's behaviour, criticised the methods he had adopted, complained that he had endeavoured to put pressure on the French, and finally threw on him the responsibility for the failure of the negotiations.[1]

This elaborate composition which was the outcome of the Emperor's rage was as materially false as it was formally inept. All Lauderdale's letters and notes, to which we have access, are couched in polite, temperate, and judicious language. The fact that he was hostile to France must not lead us into doing him an injustice. We are fully aware that the Emperor showed but scant consideration to ambassadors, and we cannot say that his letter to Lauderdale causes us much surprise.

Notwithstanding the Emperor's injustice Lauderdale did not reply to the insult he had received, and thought that it was his duty to remain in Paris. It is a proof of his wish, in spite of everything, to conclude peace. The London Cabinet, on hearing that the provisional treaty had not been ratified by Russia, sent orders to Lauderdale that he was only to treat with France on behalf of the joint interests of Russia and England, for the two Powers were again in the position they had occupied before the signature of d'Oubril's treaty.[2]

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 212. Talleyrand to Lauderdale, 4th September, 1806.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 220. Lauderdale to Talleyrand, 13th September, 1806, and Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates* (Windham (*vice* Fox) to Lauderdale, 10th September, 1806).

Lauderdale therefore informed Talleyrand that he would shortly communicate to the negotiators the conditions on which Russia would be prepared to treat with France, and in the event of these conditions being accepted by England and the Emperor, he offered to present them in the form of a treaty, and to insert a clause in the provisional treaty between Great Britain and France, that should bind his Britannic Majesty to endeavour to obtain the acquiescence of his Majesty the Russian Emperor. All subsequent negotiations were to be conducted in writing. This method of procedure was inevitable, for Lauderdale was not authorized to treat for Russia.

Unfortunately these proposals, which would have enabled the Emperor to bring his wars to an end, by signing peace with the two Powers at once, arrived too late.

After the 3rd of September, the day on which he had received the despatch from St. Petersburg, Napoleon completely abandoned all ideas of peace. This is proved by the letter which Talleyrand wrote by his orders to Champagny on the 4th, telling him to postpone indefinitely the conference which should have been held on that day with Lauderdale.[1] From that moment he affected to consider the negotiations with the English Cabinet as of no importance, and devoted all his attention to the war against Prussia. His letters to Joseph on the 10th, 13th, and 17th of September establish the matter beyond dispute.[2] Finally, his note

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 211.

[2] Napoleon's Correspondence, vol. xiv., 10760, 10776, 10807. In his letter of the 13th he announces that Lord Yarmouth, on his return to London, was carried in triumph by the people

of the 10th of September "on the actual state of my affairs," merely contains instructions about the Prussian war, the resumption of war with Russia, and not a word about the negotiations with England.[1] However, the breaking off of negotiations with Lauderdale entailed no immediate consequences. On the 14th of September, the day after he had proposed to Talleyrand to negotiate a peace jointly for England and Russia, Lauderdale fell ill. The death of Fox, which had occurred on the evening of the 13th, was an event of far greater moment. In the *Moniteur* of the 15th of December, 1810, after a pompous eulogy of Fox, Napoleon continued in these terms:

"Everything was pointing to the successful issue of the negotiations, when Fox died; then negotiations flagged, and the Ministers were neither sufficiently enlightened, nor sufficiently cool to feel the need of peace. England incited Prussia to war. Lauderdale hesitated, thought it his duty to send a messenger to his court; the messenger's return announced his recall."

Many contemporaries shared this opinion, and the failure of the negotiations with France have been attributed to the violent opposition of Lord Howick,[2] Fox's successor in Foreign Affairs.

We shall see how much truth there is in this assertion.

because of his conciliatory attitude. Napoleon here furnishes us with a weapon of attack on his own conduct and an argument in favour of the desire that the English manifested to come to terms.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603.

[2] He was First Lord of the Admiralty, and only succeeded Fox in Foreign Affairs during the month of October.

In the first place, ever since the 2nd of September, Fox had ceased to correspond in person with Lauderdale. Lord Spencer, the Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs, and Mr. Windham were acting for him. It was in pursuance of orders from Windham that the negotiator, despite the insults which Napoleon had heaped upon him in his letter of the 4th of September, made his offer of the 13th of September for a common agreement between France, England and Russia, as we have stated above.

Until the 18th of September, Lord Lauderdale was too ill to receive Talleyrand; on that day our Minister was able to see him, and found him weak but convalescent:

"Judging by the conversation I have had with him, *I believe he is unwilling to break off negotiations*; he wishes them to be shortly resumed and would like them to be completed before Parliament resumes its sitting. If Cuba, which belongs to Spain, were given them, they would abandon Buenos-Ayres, and no request would be made for the Dutch Colonies. *Under any circumstances Lauderdale is willing to discuss terms.* He should be quite recovered in a couple of days."[1]

This admission of Talleyrand's, dated the 18th of September, is deserving of the most careful attention.

The formally expressed desire of the English to come to an understanding was met by the Emperor with a carefully devised refusal. He advanced a formal difficulty:

[1] P. Bertrand, *op. cit.* Talleyrand to Napoleon, 18th September, 1806.

"He is willing to continue to treat with England alone, and the English plenipotentiary is at liberty to insert in the treaty, as an open or secret clause, anything which he may consider calculated to reconcile the differences between France and Russia. He wishes to secure peace and hopes that the conditions proposed by Lord Lauderdale may be in accordance with the dignity and the power of the two empires."[1]

It was a mere blind; for had the Emperor really desired peace on that occasion, why did he refuse to sign the treaty which was so favourable to him, and which had been submitted to him by the English as early as the 31st of July previous?

Talleyrand brought this note with his own hand to Lauderdale, who was still in bed, was politeness itself, and did all in his power to explain away any points which might possibly cause offence. As he read it again Lauderdale felt there might be room for hope; he had asked Talleyrand, by word of mouth, whether if he signed peace at once with Napoleon the war with Prussia would be averted; he received a verbal assurance in the affirmative.[2] Under these conditions it is possible to understand Lauderdale's haste and extreme eagerness to bring the hostilities between France and England to an end. In reply to the note of the 18th he wrote consenting to the Emperor's proposals, although they were not quite in accordance with his

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 227. Talleyrand to Lauderdale, 18th December, 1806, and Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. v. (Lauderdale to Lord Spencer, 19th September, 1806).

[2] This is proved by a letter from Champagny to Napoleon of the 10th of December, 1810 (*Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1674).

instructions.[1] Lauderdale expected a definite and favourable answer. Five days passed, and on the morning of the 25th he heard that Napoleon had left for Mayence to take command of the troops against Prussia. Clarke and Talleyrand were under orders to leave Paris. Lauderdale's visions of peace were dissolved; his plans were upset. Napoleon, by escaping from the discussion, had made the conclusion of peace impossible; he had discovered his real intentions, which he had till then concealed; he had determined to crush Prussia before undertaking fresh negotiations.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 229. Lauderdale to Talleyrand, 19th September, 1806.

CHAPTER XVII

LORD LAUDERDALE'S PRESENTATION SWORD

CHAMPAGNY, who was left alone in Paris, had instructions to keep up some pretence of negotiating until Lauderdale should leave Paris of his own accord. To save appearances, Talleyrand left him with orders to treat about Tobago, the French possessions, Hanover, which was to be restored to England, the Cape, the Balearic Isles, and finally Surinam. "The Emperor leaves England the enjoyment of her vast power and immense wealth in consideration of the surrender of Gorée and Santa Lucia to France, and the restoration to the allies of France of such possessions as are not specified in the long list of previously mentioned transfers; finally Sicily shall be evacuated by the British troops and occupied by King Joseph.[1] To Russia, who has lost nothing in the war, the Emperor will abandon Corfu[2] to indemnify King Ferdinand of Naples, and will confirm Russia in all the advantages which were allowed her in the treaty of the 20th of July which was never ratified (d'Oubril's treaty)."

Let us remark for the last time, that these proposals,

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 242.

[2] Corfu had been conquered by the Russians, who were still in occupation at that date.

with the exception of King Ferdinand's indemnity, for which Corfu was suggested instead of the Balearic Isles, were in absolute harmony with the English proposals of the 31st of July. Champagny was to forward to Talleyrand in Germany the details of his interviews with Lauderdale and if need be to ask for fresh instructions. Thus the added difficulty of distance enhanced the difficulties which were attendant on the vexed questions at issue between the three nations and their allies. At least ten days would have to elapse before a reply could be received from the Emperor.

On the evening of the 25th of September, Champagny had an interview with Lord Lauderdale, and saw him again on the afternoon of the 26th. Unfortunately new instructions had just reached Lauderdale from London: the English Cabinet, confronted with the only too probable resumption of war with Russia, and the practical certainty of a fresh conflict in Prussia, would no longer agree to the terms of the treaty they had been proposing to the Emperor for the last two months. They now claimed Dalmatia for King Ferdinand of Naples, while the Balearic Isles were to be given to the King of Sardinia.[1] Sicily was no

[1] These proposals, made by Lauderdale on the 26th of September, are neither mentioned in the *Moniteur* of the 26th November, 1806, nor in Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates* (Lauderdale to Spencer, September 26th). But in Champagny's letter to Talleyrand, dated the 26th of September, to which we shall refer later, there is evidence which makes their existence a certainty (F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 254). The documents among the papers of the *Affaires Etrangères*, Paris, are more complete than those quoted in Hansard, and are therefore a safer guide.

longer offered in so formal a manner as in the past, but we were given to understand that this question could be compromised if we would evacuate Dalmatia.[1] Thus at the close of September, 1806, Napoleon could still have made peace, a little less advantageously, perhaps, than a fortnight earlier, for reasons for which he was himself to blame, but still on terms most advantageous to France. We were to keep Holland, Italy, and the Protectorate of the Rhine Confederation; the English were to abandon Sicily, which we could very possibly never have conquered, owing to the loss of our navy. Sicily was in reality as valuable as Dalmatia; or even more so, as enabling us to dominate the Mediterranean and control Malta, Napoleon, however, wished to keep all the places then in his occupation, and also to secure, by means of a treaty for peace, the island of Sicily, which he had been unable to win by force of arms. Besides, what would be the effect of the proposed arrangement on his plan for making the Adriatic into a French lake and of threatening Constantinople by the occupation of Dalmatia? Champagny declared to Lauderdale in his master's name that the bare idea of evacuating Dalmatia in order to give it to the deposed King of Naples was an insult to the army which had conquered it; and yet he was willing to cede Corfu to the same monarch.

How could there be any disgrace in an army evacuating one of its conquests on the declaration of peace, especially when an equivalent was to be secured without striking a blow? Peace negotiations are full

[1] To save Prussia, England would have abandoned Sicily to Joseph Napoleon.

of such evacuations, and the greatest Powers have given their consent to them. And so in September, 1806, in order to keep possession of Dalmatia, a distant province, whose possession could not add to the security of France, Napoleon sacrificed Sicily and the glory of restoring peace to the world.

Pending the Emperor's decision, the two negotiators met and dined together to avoid breaking off negotiations prematurely, though they had no hope of bringing them to a successful conclusion. On the 4th of October Lauderdale forwarded a note, entirely different from the proposed treaty of the 31st of July, and even from the latest proposals which he had just made to Champagny on the 26th of September. This change of attitude on the part of the English Cabinet was due to their settled conviction that the war which had just been commenced with Prussia would make any understanding with France impossible, and to their wish to lay papers before the Houses, wherein the War Party, which was about to assume power, should be unable to discover the important concessions which had been offered to France during the last three months.[1]

This note was only forwarded as a matter of form by Lauderdale. There was no reasonable probability that it would be accepted, for it provided that King Ferdinand of Naples should keep possession of Sicily.

"4th October, 1806.

"Lord Lauderdale is reluctantly compelled to inform his Excellency that he has received summary

[1] The tone of George III.'s speech on the 21st of October, 1806, confirms this opinion.

orders from his Government not to discuss any further negotiations until the conditions proposed by Lord Lauderdale concerning the cession of Dalmatia and the Bocche di Cattaro, and the guarantee to be given to its legitimate sovereign for the possession of Sicily, have received the assent of the French Government; these possessions must be left in the occupation of English or Russian troops agreeably to the proposal that Lord Lauderdale had the honour to make with respect to them to his Excellency.

"The despatches that Lord Lauderdale has just received have been written on the supposition that, in consequence of the refusal of the French Government to consent to the conditions enounced above, and already proposed by Lord Lauderdale, the passport he had asked for had already been given to him. In the event of his having not yet received his passport, and provided that he have no good reason to believe that the preliminary conditions will be agreed to, Lord Lauderdale has orders to formally declare his mission closed and emphatically to renew his request for a passport."[1]

The Emperor's reply to the English proposals of the 26th of September arrived on the 5th of October. As could only be expected after Champagny's remarks to Lauderdale on the 26th, it contained no conciliatory proposal, and threw all the blame on the London Cabinet. It concluded by authorizing Champagny to give his passport to the British negotiator.[2]

Lord Lauderdale's acknowledgement of this final note is couched in grandiloquent language.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fol. 10.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. 603, fol. 259. Talleyrand to Champagny, Mayence, 30th September, 1806.

"The conditions that the undersigned was ordered to propose between the Emperor of Russia and the French Government were conditions enjoined by justice and an appreciation of the nature of the situation. Justice was thereby satisfied, for assuredly nothing was more equitable than to grant his Sicilian Majesty and the King of Sardinia some compensation for the losses they had sustained on the continent. The situation was adequately dealt with, for to insure a lasting peace, an arrangement of boundaries calculated to prevent disputes will always be preferable to a settlement which allows one party the means of making an advantageous attack. The proposal that France should evacuate Dalmatia and Albania was the logical outcome of this principle. If, therefore, the undersigned has received orders to ask for his passport and to leave France, it is certainly not that his sovereign is no longer desirous of peace, but that he is forced to take this step because the French Government has refused to consent to all the conditions laid down in the original proposal made by his Britannic Majesty."[1]

Before leaving for London[2] Lauderdale thought that it would be well to make Champagny a present in remembrance of the relations that had existed between them; he sent him a beautifully worked steel sword in a case, with the following note:

"Lord Lauderdale begs his Excellency, Monsieur de Champagny, to be so kind as to accept from him a sword that he has had sent from England, to show the high state of perfection that has been reached in that country in the manufacture of arms. He hopes

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fol. 21. Lauderdale to Talleyrand, 6th October, 1806.

[2] He left Paris on the 9th of October and Boulogne on the 11th.

that Monsieur de Champagny will do him the honour of wearing it; it may serve to occasionally remind his Excellency of one who has conceived a real esteem for his person and for his noble qualities, in the course of the relations that they have conducted together."

Undoubtedly Lauderdale's intentions were excellent, but we must admit that the present was singularly ill-chosen. Champagny considered it as the symbol of eternal warfare, thought it most out of place, and returned the sword at the risk of offending Lauderdale.

"I wrote him a nice letter to soften the harshness of my refusal; the better the workmanship of the sword, the more was it incumbent on a Home Minister not to wear it and thus emphasize the excellence of the work of our industrial rivals." [1]

Certainly Lord Lauderdale was an unfortunate negotiator; even with the best of intentions he could not bring any negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion. Talleyrand, who prided himself on his courtesy, disapproved of Champagny's action; on the 10th of October he wrote to Hauterive from Mayence:

"Lord Lauderdale must have left. I cannot understand why he ever gave the sword and why Champagny refused it. He ought not to have made the present to begin with, but, once it was given, it should have been accepted and a present of double the value sent in return—some article of our own manufacture, made far better than it could have been in England, either

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fols. 16-17. Champagny to Talleyrand, October 4th, 1806.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE AUSTRIAN CABINET TRY TO INTERVENE (APRIL, 1807)

IN the spring of 1807 opinion was divided in Austria; the aristocracy, the army, and the mass of the nation were in sympathy with the Russians, and continually urged the Emperor Francis to fall with the full strength of the kingdom on Napoleon's right wing, while his army was buried in the Polish swamps; the Cabinet, under the presidency of Count Stadion, held totally different views.[1] To satisfy the public they armed their reserves and ordered levies to be made; to insure the success of their own policy they offered to mediate between the belligerents, and later on tried to establish a friendly footing with France.[2] The letters of General Andréossy, the French ambassador[3] at Vienna, bear evidence to this double attitude.

In the early part of January, 1807, General Baron Vincent came to Warsaw, and for three months had

[1] Cf. Albert Vandal, *Napoleon and Alexander*, vol. vi., pp. 28, 40 *sqq*.

[2] F. O. R., Austria, Correspondence, vol. 380, and Supplement, vol. xxviii.

[3] We have already seen Andréossy as the representative of France in London. We shall see later that he became ambassador at Constantinople.

"He accepts for himself and his allies the friendly intervention of His Majesty the Emperor of Austria to re-establish the peace that is so necessary to all the peoples concerned. His Majesty has only one fear, that the Power which hitherto seems to have conceived the settled plan of basing its rise and greatness on continental divisions, may endeavour to use the congress to devise fresh subjects of bitterness and fresh points of difference. Yet no means which may possibly save the shedding of blood and bring the consolation of peace to so many families must be neglected by France, which, as all Europe knows, has been forced into the present war."[1]

The Emperor's sincere gratification at this occurrence cannot be doubted. In fact, on the 14th he informed Talleyrand that he was satisfied with Austria's proposal and prepared to send her a favourable reply; moreover, that on general grounds he was very desirous of combining his system with that of the House of Austria. On the following day he adds: "I send you the note, as I wish it to be sent, and it seems to me that I have given it an innocent appearance. It is true and therefore good." The place for the congress is indifferent to him; possibly Cracow, but Lemberg would be preferable.

"You will see that I have avoided making mention of the Porte, and have simply referred to the Emperor and his allies. When we are asked who are our allies, we shall say, Spain, etc., the Porte and Persia.

[1] F. O. R., Austria, Correspondence, vol. 380, fol. 138. Talleyrand to Vincent, 19th April, 1807. Cf. Driault, *Napoléon à Finkenstein* in the *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique*, July, 1899.

"To all M. de Vincent's observations you must reply: that is a question on which we are indifferent. Be sure too to make incessant use of the pretext that in my absence you do not know what answer to give."[1]

On the 22nd Napoleon recommended extreme circumspection to Talleyrand, and on the following day accused him of having made a grave error in writing to de Vincent that an armistice on the basis of the *status quo praesens* might be acceptable to France. His letter concluded with these words, which were in absolute contradiction to his letter of the 14th:

"I look on Austria's intervention in the matter as a misfortune. I replied to it because at the moment I did not wish to give any pretext for war. We must enter into long discussions on every point."

This change of attitude was entirely inconsequent. On the 20th of March, the Emperor had written to Talleyrand from Osterode: "I am of opinion that when two Powers like France and Russia want peace, they can best obtain it by direct communication."[2] On the 14th of April he informed the same Minister that the intervention of Austria caused him the utmost satisfaction. On the 22nd he considered it unfortunate, and to make sure that Talleyrand, whom he was

[1] Napoleon's Correspondence, 12373 and 12390, from Finkenstein. The offer of Austrian intervention said not a word about Turkey, but de Vincent assured Talleyrand, that though not mentioned it was quite clearly indicated, and that, moreover, the note would be forwarded to Turkey. F. Bertrand, *Lettres de Talleyrand à Napoléon*, p. 420 (Talleyrand to Napoleon, 7th April, 1807).

[2] F. O. R., France, vol. 1780.

beginning to distrust, should not get too far involved with de Vincent, he summoned the Minister on the 29th to his headquarters at Finkenstein.

The Minister, who was always in favour of a proposal emanating from Austria, had written to the Emperor on receipt of his reply of the 14th of April: "I find it noble, simple, and true, and I hope that it will completely satisfy the expectations of the Court of Vienna." He soon realized that his master would reject it; the silence he was ordered to preserve made his position with de Vincent very unpleasant, and it may well be, that he was much relieved to quit Warsaw on the 3rd of May. The Austrian envoy, however, was broken-hearted at finding himself deserted.[1]

[1] Pierre Bertrand, *Lettres inédites de Talleyrand à Napoléon*, p. 423, 20th April and 1st May, 1803.

CHAPTER XIX

THE REPLY OF THE ALLIES TO THE PROPOSAL OF AUSTRIAN INTERVENTION.—NAPOLEON RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS FAILURE

WE have seen from Talleyrand's letter to de Vincent of the 19th of April,[1] that Napoleon suspected England of entertaining designs calculated to provoke new difficulties. The reply from the Court

[1] P. 147. In the *Moniteur* of the 15th of December, 1810, to which we have already referred, Napoleon published some documents dealing with the Austrian and Russian intervention of 1807-8. But he passed over a great number in silence, and especially all those that concerned the peaceful negotiations of Austria in the spring of 1807. The *Moniteur* only contains documents dealing with the preliminaries of the following winter and of the autumn of 1808.

On the 26th of January, 1808, the English Cabinet gave Parliament access to a number of rather more important documents, in view of the debates which were held on this subject in the House of Commons on the 16th and 29th of February, 1808. (Cf. Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. x., col. 100 *sqq.*)

It would, however, be unfair to use these publications only as references to secure an impartial and above all complete exposition of the Austro-Russian intervention between 1807-1808.

Alison, *op. cit.*, vol. vii., pp. 156-163, gives very few details on the negotiations of 1806, and says nothing of those which occurred during 1807-1808. The same observation applies to

of St. James's proves the supposition to have been baseless. For we read:

"The English Government accepts the intervention of Austria and undertakes to join in the negotiations, so soon as the consent of all the Powers most interested in the war shall have been obtained. The Government is willing to agree to any place for the conduct of negotiations, provided that it shall be outside the immediate influence of the seat of war, and that it shall afford equally to all the Powers free and uninterrupted communication with their plenipotentiaries."

There is here a reference to the difficulties experienced in 1806, by Lord Lauderdale and Lord Yarmouth, at Paris, in communicating with their Cabinet. We have described above the treatment to which they were subjected by Napoleon, and England wished to avoid the repetition of anything similar in the proposed conference.

Prussia declared "that she would accept if she could believe that the basis on which France would consent to open negotiations would be such that her honour would allow of her entering into them, and she urged that His Majesty the Emperor of Austria should deign to invite France to declare the basis on which she proposed to treat, that the King of Prussia should be notified of its character, and that if it were not inconsistent with the interests of his country and his

Walter Scott, *Life of Napoleon*, vol. vi. There is a short account of the negotiations in *The Life of Napoleon I.*, by Dr. Rose, vol. ii., pp. 126-7. Cf. A. Beer, *Zehn Jahre Oesterreich'scher Politik*, pp. 282 and 302; E. Wertheimer, *Geschichte Oesterreichs und Ungarn*, vol. ii., p. 221.

a set of bronzes or some other present. Kindest regards. T."[1]

[1] F. O. R., England, Supplement, vol. xxxvi., fol. 44. According to Talleyrand (*Mémoires*, vol. vi., p. 30) the negotiations of 1806 only resulted in avenging England on Prussia, far more than England herself had wished. It was impossible to restore Hanover to England, because we had no equivalent to give to Prussia.

could not refuse to send representatives with full powers.

And so, during the last few days of April, he made haste to communicate the reply received from France to the three other belligerents, and sent orders to de Vincent to urge on a discussion with Talleyrand. As Talleyrand had just left Warsaw, de Vincent wrote to him on the 10th of May to ask for admission to the Emperor's presence and to suggest that the Congress should meet at Prague.[1] Stadion thought that his intervention had come at a most opportune moment; but, unfortunately for the success of Austria's efforts, Napoleon's military position had greatly improved between the 19th of April, when he accepted the offer and the 12th of May. Moreover, he had been annoyed by an indiscreet letter from the King of Prussia.[2]

Talleyrand's reply to de Vincent on the 12th of May reflects both these occurrences. It will be well to quote it entire:

"His Majesty has honoured me by informing me of a letter he has received from His Majesty, the King of Prussia, which has doubtless been communicated to

[1] F. O. R., Austria, Supplement, vol. xxviii., fol. 204. De Vincent to Talleyrand, 10th May, 1807. Cf. Vicomte de Marquessac, *Napoléon et l'Angleterre*, 1842. This work is an incomplete exposition of the Polish campaign of 1807, and of England's policy at the time. The author credits Napoleon with the initiative in the proposal for a peace congress before the battle of Eylau; he then blames Alexander and England for the failure of the negotiations (vol. i., pp. 151-152 *sqq.*).

[2] E. Bonnal, in *La diplomatie prussienne de la paix de Presbourg à Tilsit*, does not mention the Austrian negotiations of the spring of 1807, but he describes at length the diplomatic relations of Napoleon and Prussia before the campaign of 1806.

the Cabinet of Vienna. The Cabinet of Vienna will have noted with some surprise, that a condition was made that the Emperor Napoleon should admit to a common share in the negotiations all the Powers which were united against him in the present war, and that at the same time there was apparently a refusal to allow the sublime Ottoman Porte to share in these same negotiations. His Majesty the Emperor has shown in his reply that such conditions could not lead to the stable, honourable, and universal peace, which figures in the prayers and is necessary to the welfare of all Europe, and he has proposed to lay down the principle, that all the parties involved on either side should be represented in the proposed Congress. I shall have the pleasure of informing your Excellency of the consequences attending these proposals, that your Excellency may instruct the Court of Vienna and keep it in touch with any fresh developments which may arise in connection with this matter."[1]

De Vincent forwarded this note, which was tantamount to a refusal to join the Congress, to Stadion; but hoping that he might yet overcome the Emperor's repugnance, he again, on the 29th, requested a personal interview to obtain permission to continue the negotiations. He received no answer. In pursuance of the order of his Court he repeated his request on the 8th, the 16th, and the 19th of June.

Meanwhile, on the 9th of June, Talleyrand wrote him a short note to tell him that he had delayed answering his letter until the Emperor's return, and that his Majesty had been ready to comply, when the

[1] F. O. R., Austria, Supplement, vol. xxviii., fol. 206, and Napoleon's Correspondence, vol. xv., 12487, letter to the King of Prussia.

Russians made a surprise attack all along the line of his outposts; consequently the Emperor had advanced and he himself had gone to Danzig, which had just capitulated.[1] And nothing further.

Six days later the Russians were crushed at Friedland, direct negotiations were opened up between France, Russia, and Prussia, and peace was made between them at Tilsit, without Austria being even authorized to express an opinion. The general peace which Austria had hoped to bring about by opening a Congress had fallen through by Napoleon's fault; he was more anxious to dispose of Russia than to conclude his quarrel with England and thus restore peace to the world.

[1] Talleyrand, who usually passes a very severe judgment on Napoleon in his *Mémoires*, treats his attitude on this occasion very leniently. "Napoleon," he writes (vol. i., p. 313), "wishing to enter into some negotiations, recalled me. Every attempt he made was ineffectual. As he realized himself in a few days, it was necessary to continue fighting." He makes no further comments. Talleyrand had a greater interest than Napoleon in the success of these negotiations, for they were as much his work as that of Austria; he knew, better than anyone else, the reason for their failure. It is hard to understand the criticism he here makes, which is quite at variance with the real facts of the case.

CHAPTER XX

RUSSIAN MEDIATION CHECKED (AUGUST, 1807). NAPOLEON'S MISTAKE

THE Cabinet of Vienna had then such need of retrenchment to re-establish on a firm basis its finances, which had been disordered for the last ten years, that it could not take offence at Napoleon's treachery in treating without it, and almost against its interests, at Tilsit. There was, too, in the compact a stipulation which compelled Alexander to offer mediation between France and England. This vague hope of peace was for the moment sufficient to calm somewhat Austria's regrets. Stadion therefore did no more than order de Vincent to write Talleyrand a letter showing how hurt he had been to see his good offices rejected by France, and emphasizing the interest taken by his Austrian Majesty in the conclusion of peace between the French and English Courts.

It was Andréossy's business to watch the impression produced on the Cabinet of Vienna by the news of the peace of Tilsit; he thought that Napoleon must have convinced himself of the loyalty and good intentions of Austria, and of the fact that all the statements which de Vincent had been instructed to make were true.[1] However, Stadion broke out into a violent

[1] F. O. R., Austria, Supplement, vol. xviii., fol. 226, and Correspondence, vol. 380, fol. 239.

attack on Russia, which he accused of having led Prussia to her destruction. In his reply Andréossy ignored this demonstration, and informed Stadion that the Emperor was quite satisfied with the conduct of Austria, and in gratitude to him had decided that the difficulties which were still under discussion about the limits of the Austro-Italian frontier should be removed. Thus this first effort at intervention had at least brought some benefit to the Cabinet of Vienna.

Stadion was sincere in his desire to secure peace between France and England; the fresh efforts he now proceeded to make establish the matter beyond dispute.

We have seen above that on the 7th of April Prince Starhemberg had forwarded to the English Cabinet the general note in which the opening of a congress was proposed. Russia and England were not responsible for its failure. Napoleon alone is to blame. On the 11th of July the Austrian ambassador made a fresh attempt, but Canning, being painfully impressed with the direct understanding between France and Russia, could only give a non-committal answer. Three weeks later Starhemberg gave enthusiastic support to the Russian note, offering the intervention of the Emperor Alexander, conformably with Article 13 of the treaty of Tilsit.[1] The proposal reached London

[1] Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. x., col. 101 *sqq.* D'Alopéus, Russian Minister in London, to Canning, August 1st, 1807. He announces to him the conclusion of the treaty of Tilsit, and offers the Czar's intervention. Dr. Rose, in the *English Historical Review*, has shown conclusively from papers in the Record Office, that Canning's real object was to lead up to an Anglo-Scandinavian alliance, which should comprise Denmark.

at the moment when the English Government, disgusted at the conclusion of the treaty, and furious at feeling that it was isolated against Napoleon, was burning to avenge the check its fleet had recently received off Constantinople. It was hoping to achieve some great success which should reassure the English and strike terror into the heart of neutrals, and was even now preparing the hateful expedition to Copenhagen. Far from stopping England's armaments, the step taken by Russia precipitated the conclusion of the affair, and the English fleet bombarded the capital of Denmark. Under these conditions England's reply of the 5th of August to the offer of Russian mediation could only be a refusal disguised in some captious form.

"His Britannic Majesty wishes to know at the outset what are the just and equitable principles on which France proposes to negotiate, and desires that the secret clauses of the treaty of Tilsit be communicated to her."

As d'Alopéus was not authorized to reply to such questions the matter ended there.[1]

As this check could not in any sense be imputed to Austria, Stadion on the 5th of September made fresh overtures for peace through the Austrian ambassador in London. They did not meet with the success he had hoped for.

At the close of the same month Lord Gower, the English ambassador at St. Petersburg, informed the Czar that the English Government definitely refused

[1] Napoleon did not fail to publish Canning's reply in the *Moniteur* of the 15th December, 1810.

his friendly offices, and Alexander, faithful to the promises made to Napoleon, promulgated his manifesto of the 26th of October, and then declared war on England.

Napoleon's mistake lay in his belief that he could persuade England to enter into negotiations through the intervention of mediators, such as Russia and Austria. No two Powers could have been worse qualified to act in this capacity; for twelve years they had been the faithful allies of England and had accepted large subsidies from her; rudely separated from her by Napoleon's sword, they were now forced to adopt an almost hostile attitude towards their old ally by giving her the option of accepting their intervention or breaking with them. The English Cabinet had accepted Austrian intervention in the month of April previous because they believed that Austria was fully independent, but the offer of Russia immediately after the peace of Tilsit offended them, because they saw in Russia an old ally of the past in the enemy's camp. English public opinion would never have consented to receive peace at the hands of such an intermediary.

The struggle against Napoleon had not yet assumed the desperate character given it by the events in Spain, and in 1807 the English wanted peace, provided it could be made on sufficiently advantageous terms. Napoleon also wanted peace. But frank and open overtures were distasteful to his pride and to his tortuous policy. The English on their side waited till the Emperor should copy Fox's methods in 1806, and, by way of a return, should send plenipotentiaries not to England, for they did not dare to hope for that, but to Holland. Lord Lauderdale and Lord

Yarmouth were in Paris in 1806 to try to conclude peace; England then saw no cause to blush for the position, and there was no reason why France should now be ashamed to send negotiators to Holland.

It was a point the Emperor could not understand. He could never bring himself to make direct overtures to his everlasting enemy. On the refusal of Russian intervention he persuaded Austria to continue to approach London, and in exchange for the service he granted her the evacuation of Braunau and an advantageous ruling of the frontier on the Isonzo.

Still there was one circumstance which should have induced him to treat directly with the English Cabinet. On the 13th of July Andréossy, who was then French ambassador at Vienna, wrote that a gentleman of the name of Jenkinson, the brother of Lord Hawkesbury, who was as influential under the new Government as he had been under the old, which was saying a good deal, was then attached to the English embassy at Vienna. Jenkinson had asked the French ambassador for a passport to enable him to travel to England *viâ* Calais to attend to matters of private business, and had suggested that the feelings of the English Cabinet were for the moment such that if the French Government wished to take advantage of his journey to London to make any proposals, he could undertake the business. The personage from whom Jenkinson had these weighty revelations was none other than Lord Pembroke, who was destined to replace Mr. Adair as English Minister at Vienna, and who had just arrived in the capital.

Twelve days later Andréossy announced that news had reached him from a sure source to the effect that

London was very uneasy, and that a great need was felt there for peace.

"You imagine, wrote Lord Henry Petty to an English lady of my acquaintance, that the desire for peace died out with Fox. The new Government has the same desire, and Lord Grenville thinks that we absolutely must come to terms. Lord Henry Petty had even written to this lady bidding her make me some suggestions to this effect; but being married to a man in the Austrian Government, and knowing the secret opinions of the Cabinet of Vienna, she did not think that the step was a possible one for her to take, and it is only a few days since she revealed her secret to me. This harmonizes perfectly with the approaches made me by Mr. Jenkinson." [1]

Here we have no suggestion for a fresh Austrian intervention, but for the opening of direct relations between France and England.

This letter, which he received in Paris early in August, did not change the Emperor's views; for the despatches addressed to Andréossy by Champagny, who had just succeeded Talleyrand as Minister for Foreign Affairs, make no allusion to the English suggestions. For a month Prince Metternich discussed with Champagny the convention dealing with the Austro-Italian frontier; [2] to give additional support to

[1] F. O. R., Austria, Correspondence, vol. 380, fol. 230 and 239. Andréossy to Talleyrand. Adair did not leave his post at Vienna, and Lord Pembroke returned to England at the close of September.

[2] It was signed at Fontainebleau on the 10th of October. Metternich, in vols. i. and ii. of his *Mémoires*, emphasizes the negotiations which led to this agreement, but says not a word about the Austrian intervention between France and England.

the arguments of Austria, the Duke of Würtzburg, the brother of the Emperor Francis, came to Paris. The second part of Stadion's programme was about to be executed; he was trying to secure an intimate alliance with France with the object of neutralizing the Franco-Russian alliance, and at the same time bringing about a naval peace, if England consented to accept Austria's intervention. We shall see that the Austrian ambassador in London made a fresh attempt on these lines, but it was Napoleon who was really directing the negotiations; for, despite the failure of the first offer of Austrian intervention in the spring of 1807, he decided to make a further attempt in the winter through the Court of Vienna.

Yet he took an active interest in it, as is shown by his letters exchanged with Stadion. F. O. R., Austria, vol. 380, Correspondence.

CHAPTER XXI

SECOND AUSTRIAN ATTEMPT (NOVEMBER, 1807)

ON the 30th of October Stadion sent Starhemberg instructions touching a proposed Austrian intervention, and on the 20th of November, the ambassador forwarded Canning the following note:

"London, 20th November, 1807.

"The undersigned has the honour to inform his Excellency the Secretary of State that he has just received positive orders from his Court to represent to the British Government, as emphatically as may be, the pleasure with which he would see the close of the strife at present existing between France and England, and whose effects, etc., etc.

"His Majesty the Emperor and King, animated by a constant desire to work for peace and tranquillity, does not hesitate to present an urgent official request to His Majesty to be good enough to make him a frank declaration of his intentions in the matter and to show his readiness to enter into negotiations for a maritime peace on a basis consistent with the respective interests of the Powers concerned.

"In view of the frequently expressed desire of the Court of Saint James's that peace may be established, the undersigned ventures to hope that he will succeed in obtaining on this occasion the formal assurances desired by his Court, which should prove to all the

nations of Europe the sincerity of England's wishes for peace."[1]

This note, which was couched in such moderate language, was followed up by an energetic verbal comment from the Austrian ambassador, who insisted especially that England must compensate Denmark for the great losses she had sustained in the recent English bombardment of Copenhagen. If the British Cabinet refused the intervention of Austria or did not make a suitable reply to his offers, Starhemberg was at once to ask for his passport.

It is interesting to notice that despite the check to Russian intervention in the month of August previous, and the actual state of war between Russia and England, d'Alopéus, Alexander's minister in London had not yet left his post. Moreover, Tolstoy, the Russian minister at Paris, bade d'Alopéus join Starhemberg and use all his exertions to insure the success of the proposed Austrian intervention, so great was the desire for peace that then actuated all the Cabinets of Europe.[2]

On the 23rd of November, Canning had a long conference with the Russian and Austrian representatives and forwarded his reply to their offer of arbitration.

"His Britannic Majesty has on several occasions made known his peaceful dispositions, notably in his reply of the 25th of April to the Cabinet of Vienna[3] and in that of the 5th of August to Russia, which

[1] F. O. R., Austria, Correspondence.
[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fol. 174.
[3] *Vide supra*, p. 151.

was also forwarded to the Court of Vienna. His Majesty does not think it necessary to add anything to these declarations to prove his sincerity to the European nations. But to satisfy the emphatic request of a friendly Power, which appears to show a special anxiety in the matter, His Majesty is ready to again renew the assurances that he has so often given and declares that now, as always, he is ready to enter into negotiations to treat of peace, on a basis of perfect equality in their respective interests between the belligerents, in a manner agreeable to the good faith which His Majesty owes to his allies, and provided that the proposal be of a character to insure peace and security to Europe."[1]

After this clear and formal declaration, Canning informed the two ambassadors that King George was most eager for peace, and then added that compensation would be paid to Denmark. The letters from Starhemberg and d'Alopéus to their Cabinets do not allow us to doubt the sincerity of the English Cabinet on this occasion; they honestly wished to conclude their long-standing quarrel with Napoleon. But it was most doubtful whether he would consent.

"The matter is still undecided, and we in London are waiting till France be willing to make such propositions as she considers suitable as a basis for peace, and which, if refused by England, would put the English Cabinet completely in the wrong. It is for the Emperor to still further increase his glory and crown his exploits by a generous condescension destined to put an end to the calamities which are devastating Europe."[2]

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fol. 149.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 153. D'Alopéus to Tolstoy, 24th November, 1807.

Starhemberg thought that, taking into account the English character, their reply of the 23rd, though not fully satisfactory to Austria, was far more so than they could have dared to hope. Seeing in it a sincere desire for peace and a good opportunity of making a proposition, he asked Metternich to instruct him on the opinions of the French Court.

"I take the liberty of informing your Excellency, that if France were now to make just and reasonable offers to Great Britain, and this Power rejected them with scorn, then all Europe would be convinced of the real character of the aims she is pursuing."[1]

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603, fol. 155. Starhemberg to Stadion, through Metternich, 27th November, 1807.

CHAPTER XXII

NAPOLEON'S FRESH ACTS OF AGGRESSION TOWARDS THE ENGLISH

IT had been said, however, that Napoleon would always take a delight in trying to put difficulties in the way of conducting negotiations with England. He suggested himself the steps which were taken by Austria; he knew that the English reply would be known in the course of November, and yet on the 16th he left for Milan, taking Champagny with him, and thereby putting several hundred leagues between himself and the negotiators. He was thus hardly giving a proof of his sincere wish to bring negotiations to a favourable conclusion. Nor was that all; there was a fatality in the whole matter. By a singular caprice of fortune, on the 23rd of November, 1807, the very day that the conciliatory English reply was sent by Canning to Starhemberg, Napoleon issued the first Milan decree. Napoleon cannot be blamed for the exact coincidence of date, but the fact that he was promulgating fresh coercive measures against the English trade at the time when he was sending a messenger of peace to London, could not fail to produce a very bad impression. It is true the English Cabinet had just issued the famous Orders in Council, in reply to the Berlin decrees, which forbade

all trade with England, and ordered the confiscation of all British merchandise, and the seizure of any boat that had even touched at any port in England or in her colonies.

The exact dates are of great importance in enabling us to judge of the sequel. The Berlin decrees are dated the 21st of November, 1806. The English Cabinet replied by Orders in Council of the 11th of November, 1807, which were only published in London on the 14th. The first Milan decree was promulgated on the 23rd of November. It cannot therefore be the real reply to the Orders in Council of the 11th, for the slowness of communications between England and France, and the distance between Paris and Milan, would make it impossible for Napoleon, who was travelling from the 16th to the 22nd, to have knowledge of these Orders in Council when he promulgated his first Milan decree immediately on his arrival in the town.

The Orders in Council were in a sense justified by the Berlin decrees,[1] though the London Cabinet had taken a year to issue them, but the first Milan decree was not an answer to any measures taken by England, but, on the contrary, a direct attack, delivered at the moment when an attempt was being made at reconciliation.[2]

[1] It will be remembered that the three Orders in Council provided that any ship belonging to a neutral Power, even though more or less dependent on France, should be at liberty to enter the ports of England or her colonies and then go where she wished, provided that she had touched in England to discharge or take in cargo and that she had paid a due of 25 per cent. Any boat which had not complied with these formalities should be considered as a prize of war.

[2] The essential part of the decree of 23rd November can be

In fact it was only early in December that Napoleon heard of the decrees in Council of the 11th of November, and replied to them by the second Milan decree, of the 17th,[1] a decree which he had a perfect right to make, though in the interests of peace he would have acted more wisely in delaying its promulgation for a few weeks. This second decree, which was the most stringent of all, made a reconciliation with England very difficult and very considerably intensified the violent system inaugurated at Berlin in the previous year. It denationalized and declared to be a prize of war any ship which "should have submitted to a visit from an English vessel, should have made a voyage to England, or to any of her colonies, or should have paid any due whatsoever to the English Government."

Already, before leaving Paris, the Emperor had given orders to Lavallette, the director-general of the postal service, to burn all correspondence coming from England, especially by way of Holland, after reading it and taking copies of the most important documents it contained. "I can only express my displeasure at your lack of energy in putting a stop to that correspondence. One would imagine that you

briefly stated. Any boat which shall have touched in England for any reason whatsoever, and shall then have put into a French port, shall be seized and confiscated, with her cargo, no exception or distinction being made between food and merchandise. If there be any suspicion as to the origin of the cargo, it shall be placed in bond, until it be decided that it has come neither from England nor from any of her colonies.

[1] The preface of this decree expressly states: "In view of the measures taken by the British Government on the 11th of November last."

were quite indifferent in the matter. *Of all the measures adopted against England, it is the one which will do her the greatest harm.*" On the 14th he again confirmed these stringent orders and had them sent to the Italian viceroy.[1] The day before, he had again recommended Gudin, the Finance Minister, to burn all merchandise coming to Bordeaux and Anvers on vessels sailing from America.

Following out another order of ideas, Napoleon sent Junot, at the head of thirty thousand men, to take Portugal from the House of Braganza, which in his eyes had shown too much friendship for the English. During the last days of November the French occupied Lisbon, but the reigning family fled to Brazil on British vessels with their treasures. It was a real blow to England, both to her commerce and to her prestige.

At the same time Napoleon, in the hope of taking Sicily from the English, gave orders to fit out the Toulon fleet, and wrote to Joseph: "Lead an expedition against Scylla and Reggio and free the continent from the presence of the English; you have ten times as many men as you need for the purpose, and the time of the year is very propitious." He emphatically urged his brother to make a descent on Sicily, and, desiring to increase still further the difficulties of the London Cabinet, he gave orders on the 16th of December to Louis, King of Holland, to organize an active maritime war against the enemy's commerce.[2] These measures were hardly likely to conciliate England and facilitate Austrian intervention. But Napoleon wished to frighten his rival, to strike still heavier

[1] Lecestre, *Lettres inédites de Napoléon*, vol. iv., p. 121.
[2] Lecestre, *op. cit.*, vol. i., pp. 123, 124, 128.

blows at her commerce and the persons of her allies, and to force her to accept peace, while he himself was instigating the attempts at reconciliation.

The English Cabinet then gave Napoleon a further proof of their good intentions. Louis XVIII. had just sought refuge in England, leaving Gothenburg on the Swedish frigate *Fraya*, and he wished to disembark at Yarmouth. The authorities refused to allow him to land; the fugitive monarch insisted, and after three days' deliberation, Canning decided to receive him on the express conditions that he was to live in England as a private citizen and make no attempt on the order established in France.[1]

On the 4th of December, Tolstoy advised Champagny of this characteristic incident, and Metternich implored Napoleon to come to terms with England:

"The Emperor in his great wisdom will decide whether in his opinion the English reply gives sufficient motive to pursue the work of peace. I am waiting for his orders and will forward them to Starhemberg."[2]

On receipt of this letter Napoleon decided to reply to the English note of the 23rd of November. The letter he wrote through Champagny to Metternich is very long and diffuse. It begins by enumerating the Emperor's grievances against England:

"The London Cabinet wish for peace; they have said so before, especially on the 5th of August, in

[1] F. O. R., England, vol. 603 (b), Tolstoy to Champagny; and cf. Vaulabelle, *Histoire des Deux Restaurations*, vol. i., pp. 114-115.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fol. 164, Metternich to Champagny.

reply to Russia's offer of intervention; the day following they undertook the expedition to Copenhagen; on the 14th of November they issued the Orders in Council. Is it not clear that they wish to gain time and to prevent the evil effect that will be produced in England by the knowledge of the noble sentiments that actuate the Emperor of Austria?"

After insisting, at greater length, perhaps, than the occasion warranted, on the questionable conduct of the English Cabinet, Champagny continued in these terms:

"We must therefore do away with these diplomatic formalities in which the English Cabinet have wrapped themselves as in a cloud, in order to cloak their real intentions, to gain time, and to keep an ignorant and credulous people in their present state of error. Austria must continue her work of pacification, as she does not arouse the distrust of England by her fleet."

There is a great deal of truth in these contentions, but it was quite useless to detail them, and, in the interests of peace, the Emperor should have abstained from thus casting reflections on the British people.

Finally, we come to the Emperor's proposals:

"Let England show her real sincerity by naming plenipotentiaries to negotiate a peace between France and England. The Prince of Starhemberg can then stay in London, and will be authorized to grant these ministers passports to the continent. If the Government refuses this proposal, it is obvious that it is no more sincere now than it was when it attacked Copenhagen and declared all Europe to be in a state of blockade."[1]

[1] F. O. R., Austria, Correspondence, vol. 380, fol. 397, 15th December, 1807.

CHAPTER XXIII

DEFINITE FAILURE OF THE SECOND ATTEMPT AT AUSTRIAN INTERVENTION (JANUARY, 1808)

AS if this reply, which Starhemberg was ordered to forward as it stood, to Canning, was not sufficiently severe, the day following Napoleon promulgated the second Milan decree. He imagined that the news of this additional harsh treatment would reach London just in time to emphasize the impression that his note of the 15th would have produced, and that the English Cabinet would bow their heads in terror. Even had the Government consented to these proposals, public opinion would have been up in arms against them. But Napoleon did not reckon with public opinion either at home or abroad. It is noteworthy that, in his note of the 15th of December, he opened a fresh question which had never before been raised—the sending of plenipotentiaries before defining the lines of the discussion they were to conduct—and he asked the English alone to name envoys and to send them to Paris. In 1806 Fox had, in deference to France, intrusted Lord Yarmouth and Lord Lauderdale with this delicate mission, the failure of which we have described as due to the Emperor's evasions, and now Napoleon was asking the English again to make the first advances.

Although Tolstoy and Metternich were far from being satisfied with the Emperor's demands, they bade their London representatives put pressure on Canning to make him fall in with the Emperor's caprices, submission to which was the price of peace. Starhemberg was also to state that in the event of a refusal he was to leave England at once, and that Austria would make a declaration of war.[1] On the 1st of January, 1808, the Austrian ambassador sent Canning a very short note, demanding that plenipotentiaries should be sent to Paris to treat about the re-establishment of peace among all the Powers actually at war with England, but without specifying whether the demand emanated from the Court of France or Austria.[2] The proposal to send plenipotentiaries to Paris to expose them to the indignities they had already experienced in 1806 was highly displeasing to Canning: he would have preferred to send them to some town in Holland on condition that Napoleon should at the same time send representatives to meet them there. He spoke to Starhemberg on these lines, but unfortunately the ambassador's instructions allowed him very little discretion. The English Cabinet were simply and solely to accept the offer which had been made them to send plenipotentiaries to Paris to listen humbly to the conditions the Emperor would propose for the re-establishment of peace; or the war with France was to be continued and a rupture to take place with Austria. After eight days' reflection the

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fol. 174. Tolstoy to d'Alopéus, and Metternich to Starhemberg, 23rd December, 1807.

[2] F. O. R., England, vol. 603 (b), fol. 180.

English Cabinet forwarded a note which betrayed the great difficulty in which they then found themselves placed. They were most eager to treat with France, but refused to humiliate themselves before her.

"Prince Starhemberg has omitted to explain whether the offer of sending plenipotentiaries to Paris emanated from his master the Emperor or from the French Government. If the proposal is to be considered as coming from Vienna, the undersigned has orders to express the pain with which his Majesty has seen how little respect was paid, in forming this proposal, to the correspondence which had already passed between the Courts of Vienna and London on the subject of peace negotiations.

"His Majesty could hardly have expected that this same offer should have been repeated (if Prince Starhemberg's note is really to be looked on in this light) without some notification of the acceptance of the conditions which his Majesty had declared must inevitably precede the opening of the negotiations.

"Supposing that the note of the undersigned of the 23rd of November is looked on as the basis of the actual proposals made by Prince Starhemberg, his Majesty would draw attention to the fact that this proposal only concerns the Powers which are engaged with France in war against Great Britain, and not the allies of Great Britain who are at war with France."

Canning then puts the question in a totally different light and blames the conduct of Austria: if the Court of Vienna is only forwarding communications made her by France, she is no longer acting as a mediator; and this was really the case. If Prince Starhemberg is speaking in the name of another Power the Court of St. James's feels that it cannot allow any such communication unless papers of a specific and pro-

perly attested character are produced, definitely authorizing the act.

"It appears that the English note of the 23rd of November has been communicated to the French Government—that that Government is therefore in possession of a solemn and authentic pledge of his Majesty's desire for peace. Consequently his Majesty is justified in expecting an equally solemn and authentic pledge of a similar attitude on the part of France."

Canning next asked why France requested England to send plenipotentiaries and herself made no promise to do the same. He saw in that action a most unjustifiable mistrust of the sincerity of his Britannic Majesty. Moreover, no indications were given which could serve as a basis for negotiations.

The note concludes with this declaration, which is the fundamental principle of the English policy:

"His Majesty wishes to treat with France, but will only treat on a footing of perfect equality. He is ready to treat with the allies of France, but negotiations must also embrace the interests of the allies of Great Britain. As soon as the basis for negotiations has been satisfactorily decided, and a suitable place has been determined, his Majesty will be prepared to name plenipotentiaries to join those of the other Powers engaged in the war. But his Majesty will not again consent to send plenipotentiaries to a hostile capital."[1]

In a word, England requested France to name any town other than Paris where the plenipotentiaries

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fol. 185.

might meet; she was willing to appoint representatives, and the Emperor was to indicate in advance on what lines peace should be discussed.

These conditions were perfectly acceptable, and in no way humiliating to England or France. On receiving them Metternich recognized their fairness, but was much grieved when he realized how unacceptable they would be to Napoleon. He at once communicated them to the Emperor, who had left Milan on the 1st of January. Napoleon refused to entertain the idea of sending French plenipotentiaries to a Dutch town to enter into a discussion with his enemy on equal terms, and abandoned all ideas of making peace. Under his orders Metternich wrote to Starhemberg on the 15th of January to the effect that England was entirely responsible for the failure of the Austrian intervention, and bade him leave London before Parliament met on the 21st, on the ground of the unsatisfactory tone of the English reply of the 8th of January. The Austrian ambassador carried out his instructions on the 20th, and diplomatic relations between London and Vienna were broken off. D'Alopéus, the Russian minister, had left a few days previously and come to Paris.

CHAPTER XXIV

NAPOLEON AS A JOURNALIST

NOW we come to a Press incident which must not be passed over in silence. On the 18th of December previous the King of England had issued a declaration in reply to that of the 28th of October, in which Alexander I. had declared war on England. The English statement was couched in polite terms, and contained no phrase which could be considered insulting to Russia or France. The King of England deplored the Czar's action in breaking off his old friendly relations with him, especially at a moment when efforts were being made to arrive at a peaceful settlement. (The efforts referred to are those made by Starhemberg and d'Alopéus in November to which we have referred above.) He drew attention to the fact that he did not, in the month of August previous, refuse Russian intervention, but accepted it conditionally. Referring to the Tilsit alliance, the King supposed that secret arrangements were entered into against Great Britain, and reproached Russia for having sacrificed Prussia to her friendship for Napoleon. After deploring the harsh measures adopted by France against the King of Prussia, George III. made a clumsy attempt to justify his aggression against Constan-

tinople, as being a reply to the conclusion of the secret Tilsit arrangements.

It is true that this declaration contained statements which were far from being acceptable to Napoleon; but in view of the negotiations for peace, which were being then pursued in London, he would have done wisely to ignore this document, especially as it was not directly addressed to him, and as it was couched in polite language.

Instead of pursuing any such course, Napoleon published the English declaration in the *Moniteur* of the 7th of January, and accompanied it with very lengthy notes, which amounted to an attack of unexampled violence on England's policy ever since the rupture of the peace of Amiens. It cannot be denied that there were some grounds for the grievances of France against her old enemy, but it was hardly worth while to make the statement at that moment, especially with a bitterness so out of keeping with the correct and courteous tone of the English declaration. Napoleon began by denying that secret arrangements had been entered into at Tilsit against Great Britain, and in this he was telling the truth, but he then added phrases such as the following:

"How terribly has the unhappy English nation fallen! By what wretched counsels have its affairs been directed! In publishing a manifesto of but a few pages the English ministers have not shown sufficient good sense and reflection to avoid the most vulgar contradictions. The English are consistent only in their bad faith; they make treaties but to violate them. In the declaration issued by the King of England it is easy to see the coarse violence of an oligarchic

club, which respects nothing, which endeavours to humiliate by the harshness of its expressions, and which in default of reason has recourse to suggesting calumnies and to indulging in most unseemly sarcasms."

Napoleon then reproaches England for her double attitude in 1805 towards Prussia and Austria, criticises in insulting language the check before Constantinople in 1807, and the expedition of six thousand men to the island of Rugen in July of the same year. No one had a better right than Napoleon to criticise the military operations of another, but when he imputed their failure to the weakness of England and the cowardice of her troops, he surely forgot that a generous soldier has not the right to insult an enemy even on the field of battle. "England is therefore an utterly weak and miserable nation; her ministers must have recourse to piratical operations; they calculate the results of war at so much per cent., and only think of how much money they can win." The charge of cowardice and piracy recurs several times in the course of the notes. There is only one dignified passage, where Napoleon delivers a vehement attack on the bombardment of Copenhagen.

Not content with publishing these exaggerated views in the official organ of the empire, Napoleon ordered Metternich to send a large number of copies to Starhemberg for distribution in London, "to prove to the English, how sincerely the French Government desires peace!"

Metternich, more of a courtier than usual, saw in these notes a pledge of the peaceful intentions of the

Emperor,[1] and without a moment's delay forwarded the copies to Starhemberg.

Even supposing that Canning's reply of the 8th of January had given complete satisfaction to the Emperor's needs, and that English plenipotentiaries had been sent to Paris, the effect of the notes published in the *Moniteur* of the 7th of January must have been disastrous. They would almost certainly have led to the failure of the negotiations, for proud Albion and her ministers were deeply offended by the charges of *cowardice*, *piracy*, and *degradation* which the Emperor had just showered on them, at the moment when he was inviting them to a reconciliation.

When, after the final failure of the Austrian intervention the King of England opened Parliament on the 21st of January, he replied to the notes printed in the *Moniteur* by a statement in which he deplored the miscarriage of the proposed intervention, but without making any unseemly remarks or indulging in any violent language against France or the Emperor.

Astonishment will perhaps be felt at the readiness with which Napoleon deliberately brought about the failure of Austrian intervention, after having three months previously been so eager for its success. A new prey had just appeared to whet his ambition; the progress of events in Spain was daily making French intervention appear more possible, and Napoleon imagined that the Spanish throne would be an easy conquest.[2] As all negotiations for peace were quite

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fol. 192. Metternich to Starhemberg, 10th January, 1808.

[2] Cf. Thiers, *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, vol. xii., p. 378 *sqq*.

impossible with such plans in view, he resolved to put his Spanish project into instant execution and thus confront England with a situation *in esse*, and then make peace. The sequel of events shows that all Napoleon's acts were harmonized to fit in with this scheme.

In any case, thanks to the attempted Austrian intervention, Napoleon had secured one important result; he had set England and Austria at loggerheads, and even if peace were not made in the fairly near future, he hoped that he would be able to form a league of all the great Continental Powers against his arch-enemy.

CHAPTER XXV

A CURIOUS DOCUMENT (SEPTEMBER, 1808)

THE Foreign Office records contain a very suggestive document which deals with the negotiations conducted between England and Napoleon in 1808. It appears under three different forms. The first is Champagny's rough draft, the second is a copy by one of the Emperor's private secretaries and bears erasures and additions made in Napoleon's own handwriting, while the part consisting of the Emperor's own declaration was actually dictated by him; it may therefore justly be considered as the expression of the Master's will. The third edition, a reproduction of the second with a preamble, is the exact copy of the letter as it was written by d'Alopéus, formerly the representative of Russia in London, but then staying in Paris. The letter bears no exact date, but must have been written between Napoleon's return from Bayonne and his departure for Erfurt, *i.e.* between the 14th of August and the 20th of September.

"PARIS,
. . . . 1808.

"MY LORD,

"The great difficulty of getting news has left me wholly ignorant of the state of your health since I left you. I sincerely hope, however, that it has im-

proved, and that M. Smirnoff, who is taking this letter, will find you quite recovered.

"I feel compelled, on account of all that I have seen, observed, and heard in England, to break my silence.

"My first idea was to communicate with Mr. Canning in person, but I fear he might think that in view of the actual state of affairs I should not be justified in addressing him directly.

"The financial position and the resources of this country are far more prosperous than is believed in England, and everything prompts me to the belief that the prolongation of war is not only a misfortune for the continent but in addition most disadvantageous to your country. Peace will have to be made some day, and each delay will be to your disadvantage.

"I have had the privilege of an hour's interview with the Emperor, and told him that the basis, which I thought would be acceptable in England, would be that of the *uti possidetis* and the admission of the allies to a Congress.

"The answer given me by Napoleon was as follows: 'There has never been any objection to the inclusion of the allies; the *uti possidetis* is a basis for negotiations which I shall not refuse, and by that I mean the *uti possidetis* pure and simple; that is to say each Power is to keep what it holds at the moment of the signature of the treaty, or a system of compensation may be arranged between the two groups of belligerents.

"'The system of compensation, if that is preferred, is to be tested in a just balance, pound for pound, ounce for ounce, without it being possible for anyone, like Brennus, to let his sword weigh in the scales; absolute equality and equity are to prevail; the law must bow to neither party. I will further state,' added the Emperor, who now began to speak with animation, 'that I wish for myself nothing but what

belongs to me. The rest of my conquests I give up, either as an equivalent to the conquests made by Russia, or by way of restitution to Holland, Denmark and Spain of what is their due.'

"I was satisfied with this reply and took the liberty to put another question.

"'Supposing the second basis of compensation be accepted, what would be the conquests that your Majesty would enter for purposes of compensation?'

"'*All those*,' he answered me, '*for which definite arrangements have not yet been made*.'

"'Has your Majesty made definite arrangements for Portugal?"

"'*Not yet*,' replied the Emperor.

"'For Hanover?'

"'*No, except for the enclaves*.'

"'For Swedish Pomerania and Stralsund?'

"'I have not disposed of them,' the Emperor replied to me. I thought I ought to stop there and asked permission to inform you of what I had just heard; the Emperor then said to me: 'There is no mystery about my policy; I say openly what I wish to do, and despise all trickery and subterfuge.'

"Consequently, in my opinion, you are in a position to save the King of Sweden, who will otherwise certainly lose his whole country this summer. You are in a position to recover Hanover, and finally, what I did not dare to hope, you can restore the fine harbour of Lisbon to the House of Braganza. Will you neglect this unique opportunity? A refusal would be quite inconsistent with what you have led me to believe, and with the little experience I have had in these matters.

"The Emperor's attitude has appeared to me to be sincere, for he expresses no desire for any elaborate negotiations, notes or discussions. I believe that if you are at one with him, he is determined to bring matters

to a speedy conclusion, or, if no understanding can be arrived at, to continue the war by every means within his power.

"For myself, whatever be the issue of the step I am now taking, I deem myself fortunate in being honoured with these communications, and I know that you are too enlightened, and have too great an appreciation of the value of the occasion not to co-operate in the beneficent work of making peace.

"Before bringing my letter to a conclusion, my Lord, I am to notify you of a circumstance, which is in my opinion of the utmost importance; this country will make no difficulty in sending a confidential agent to London, to treat there, unless you prefer to send a representative to Paris yourselves.[1]

"I am, etc."

This missive, which may be considered as inspired by Napoleon himself, expresses his views on peace with England in September, 1808; it is clear that he again wished for peace, and naturally enough, as Joseph had ascended the Spanish throne. We may presume that the letter was sent to the lord for whom it was intended, and that Canning had knowledge of it. In any case it served as a preamble to the peace proposals addressed by the Emperors of France and Russia from Erfurt to England.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 693 (b), fol. 245.

CHAPTER XXVI

STEPS TAKEN BY THE TWO EMPERORS AFTER ERFURT. THE BURGOS NOTE

IN a joint letter from Erfurt, dated the 12th of October, 1808, the Emperors of France and Russia expressed their wish to see peace restored at last on the high seas, seeing, as they said, that war on the continent was concluded, without there being a possibility of its being reopened; they therefore appealed to the desire for peace that had already been so often expressed by the King of England. The letters from Champagny and Romantzoff to Canning contain clear-cut proposals fully calculated to meet England's requirements. The reader will see how different they were from the conditions that Napoleon had proposed ten months previously.[1]

"His Majesty bids me inform your Excellency that he has given two plenipotentiaries orders to proceed to the town on the continent to which his Britannic Majesty and his allies will send their plenipotentiaries. As to the basis of negotiations, their Majesties are prepared to adopt those previously proposed by England, to wit, the *uti possidetis*, or any other basis founded on the justice, the reciprocity, and the equality that

[1] *Vide supra*, pp. 171, 172, 15th December, 1807.

should prevail in the relations between all great nations."[1]

If we compare this letter with the letter from d'Alopéus dictated by the Emperor, and with the English note of the 8th of January previous, we feel convinced that in October, 1808, Napoleon had the same ideas as Canning about the terms of a general peace; he had at last recognized the justice of the English offer, both in the basis it proposed for the negotiations, and in the lines the discussion was to follow. He even specified Great Britain's allies, a thing he had never before consented to do. The Baylen disaster, the difficulties of the Spanish War and the abandonment of the proposed joint demonstration by France and Russia on the Euphrates,[2] had made Napoleon more reasonable.

As it turned out, it was the question of the allies that was destined to cause the failure of the projected reconciliation. In his reply George III. started off with the threadbare anthem about his desire for peace and the misfortunes of war; he went on to point out that he was bound by treaties and by friendship to the Kings of Portugal, Sicily, and Sweden. He admitted that he was bound to Spain by no formal compact; but he had contracted with this nation, before the whole world, sacred engagements, which in his opinion bound him as strongly as the most solemn treaties. In making proposals for a general peace, he felt convinced that Napoleon has taken into consideration the relations existing between England and the Spanish

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fol. 249.
[2] A. Vandal, *Napoléon et Alexandre Ier*, vol. i., ch. vi.

monarchy, and had realized that the Government acting for Ferdinand VIII. should be a party to the negotiations.[1]

Canning wrote to Romantzoff in Paris, "that he did not doubt but that the Czar intended to admit the Spanish delegates to the negotiations, for he had always shown a great interest in Spain, that the King of England had no need of any fresh assurances and that His Imperial Majesty could not be induced to sanction, by his co-operation or approval a usurpation of which the principle was as unjust in itself as the example was dangerous to all legitimate sovereigns."

The English reply reached Napoleon in Spain, when he was on his way to avenge the Baylen disaster, and made him furious. He did not reflect that, however displeasing the proposal to admit the Spanish rebels might be, it was not yet put forward in the English note as an *absolute* condition; it was therefore open to discussion, could be opposed and perhaps even rejected, and it would be possible to find some method of evading the question which threatened to become an absolute barrier to a reconciliation with England. Besides, Napoleon was in a position to decide it with a stroke of his victorious sword, and in a few weeks' time would show that the Spanish insurrection was finally and definitely crushed.

But for that it was necessary to gain the required time, and distance afforded an admirable excuse, to open negotiations, and in a word, to enter into a discussion, but to discuss without any violence of language.[2]

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603(b), fol. 259, 28th October, 1808. Note from Canning to Champagny.

[2] That was Champagny's opinion.

In his proposal of the 12th of October, Napoleon, through Champagny, had specified "Great Britain *and her allies.*" Now the Spanish were the allies of England not by any formal engagement, it is true, but by moral and material considerations of the weightiest import, and, finally, they were looked on as such by the English nation. The Emperor did not weigh these considerations. His desire for peace on the high seas vanished before the glory which his armies were winning in Spain, and he addressed England a storming letter, which abounded in insults to the nation and the Cabinet.

Happily for the good name of France, Champagny stopped this despatch at Paris, showed it to Romantzoff, who pointed out the mistake of forwarding it as it stood to London, and added with much justice: "If one Government accuses another of insulting it, how can they continue to treat?" Champagny assumed the responsibility of somewhat toning down the forms of the despatch and suppressing the roughness of the language.

The note written by the Emperor was dated from Burgos, the 18th of November, 1808. *It is no longer in the Foreign Office records.* It is therefore impossible to know the exact terms in which it was couched. Under this date there is only the Emperor's letter to Champagny which covered the note. A letter of Champagny's of the 26th to the Emperor leaves us in no doubt about the violence of the style, and it is notorious how indulgent Champagny was to anything for which his master was responsible. For him to consent to Romantzoff's request, it is clear that the note must have been of an extraordinary character.

Finally *it was spirited away* to avoid leaving to posterity too incriminating a document. Let us add in the interests of justice that Napoleon did not show umbrage at the liberty taken by the two ministers, for on the 7th of December he wrote to Champagny: "I approve of the changes you have made in the note; inform M. de Romantzoff of them and tell him that, in my opinion, the note is much improved by them."[1] Champagny's amendment of Napoleon's draft ran as follows:[2]

"How is it possible for the French Government to consider the proposal that has been made it to admit the Spanish nation to negotiations? What would have been the reply of the English Government, had France proposed to include the Catholic rebels in Ireland? Without having any treaty or formal relations with them, France has made them promises and often sent them help. How came it that such a proposal was admitted in a note, where the object was not to annoy but to endeavour to secure a reconciliation and to come to an understanding?"

Then follows the usual accusation of weakness and cowardice which Champagny did not dare to suppress:

"England would be making a strange error, if, running counter to past experience, she still entertained the idea of continuing the struggle with the French arms on the continent to her advantage. What hope could she have to-day, especially when France is in such close alliance with Russia?"

[1] F. O. R., France, memoranda and documents, vol. 178, fol. 156.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fol. 275. Champagny to Napoleon, 28th November, 1808.

Finally Napoleon consented to recognize the "Kings reigning in Brazil, Sicily, and Sweden, and to take the *uti possidetis* as a basis for negotiations." It will be noticed that there is no longer any question of Portugal; it has no more real existence than Spain, and the King of Portugal is only the King of Brazil.

There was no comparison possible between the Irish Catholics who had been struggling for some centuries with England, but who formed an integral part of the United Kingdom, and the Spanish rebels, who had never been considered as French and who had been only six months in arms fighting for their independence and for their legitimate sovereign. It is true that Napoleon had sent several officers to Ireland since 1803, to foster the Irish discontent and to distribute some help in money, but, since the month of August, the English Cabinet had decided to transfer all the weight of the war to Spain; five thousand English under General Spencer had appeared at Cadiz and disembarked at the mouth of the Guadiana near the Spanish frontier. Sir Arthur Wellesley, at the head of all the English forces, soon compelled Junot to capitulate at Cintra; and in October his successor, Sir John Moore, with twenty-eight thousand English, was established on Spanish territory. There was therefore real evidence of efficacious help sent from England to Spain, and England was justified in treating that country as a formal ally, while Ireland in 1808 could not possibly be considered a nation allied to France.

When the position had once been stated in these terms, any discussion was out of the question. George III. was in no way bound to answer Champagny's last note, but wishing to have the last word, and think-

ing it his business to give the Emperor a lesson in politeness, he sent a letter through Canning to say that he must decline to answer the insulting expressions which had been used against his Majesty, his allies, and the Spanish nation in Champagny's letter of the 28th of November.[1]

It would be only natural to imagine that, after so many negotiations for peace had been broken off as soon as begun, Napoleon would have given up all hope of a reconciliation with his rival. On the contrary we shall see that he soon renewed the attempts he had so often made, but abandoned official diplomacy for the methods of the secret service.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 603 (b), fol. 285, 9th December, 1806. The public declaration of George III. of the 15th of December took this letter as its theme. Cf. Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vol. xii., p. 210 *sqq.*, debates of the 26th and 31st January, 1809, to the English Parliament on the negotiations in question.

PART IV

SECRET DIPLOMACY IN 1810

CHAPTER XXVII

FOUCHÉ'S SCHEME AND FAGAN'S JOURNEY TO LONDON (FEBRUARY, 1810)

THE peace of Vienna, signed in October 1809, had just concluded the so-called Wagram campaign, and again, as in 1807 and 1808, Napoleon found himself isolated against England and her allies, Spain, Sweden, and Portugal. Once more he wished for peace, for, as he had often said, it was not possible for war to last for ever, and it would, some day or other, be necessary to come to terms with the eternal enemy. It was no longer possible to employ Russian or Austrian intervention, for the causes which had provoked failure were still efficient. To ask directly for peace was repugnant to Napoleon's great pride. It was therefore necessary to have recourse to indirect methods, which were not easy to devise. He was endeavouring to discover a way out of the situation when Fouché, the Duke of Otranto, the active Police Minister, forestalled him, and, without saying a word to his master, tried to bring about a reconciliation with Great Britain.

A gentleman of the name of Hannecart, a late officer in the "Colonel-Général" regiment, and an *émigré*, who had since returned to Paris, to whom Fouché disclosed his project, soon discovered a mes-

senger, who, he thought, would be suitable to go to London on a peaceful mission, without France being in any way officially involved. The messenger was François Fagan, of Irish extraction, formerly a captain in Dillon's regiment, an *émigré* who had returned to Paris, but who took no active part in politics.

Hannecart offered to introduce Fagan to Fouché, and told him that he might hear of business that would entail momentous consequences for himself and France. Fagan, who was charmed to get into touch with a powerful minister, went with Hannecart to see Fouché. The Minister of Police received him cordially, spoke of his very friendly relations with Lord Yarmouth, of his aged father, who was still in London, of several matters of indifference, and, without referring to the real business for which he had summoned him, he let him go after telling him to come back and see him. In a second interview Fouché continued the conversation, and spoke of the likelihood of peace and of Napoleon's desire to conclude it with England.

In the course of a third visit the minister discovered his real projects, and asked Fagan whether he would consent to go over to England and assist in the great work. The late officer accepted with enthusiasm, for he wished to see his father, and his ambition was flattered by having so important a part to play. Fouché insisted on England's need for peace, and urged Fagan to sound the Marquess Wellesley, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.[1] The intimate rela-

[1] He had recently replaced George Canning in the Cabinet, who had resigned in order to fight a duel with Lord Castlereagh, who was also a member of the Ministry. Canning received a slight wound in his thigh, while Castlereagh's life was

tions which Fagan had enjoyed with Lord Yarmouth and other members of the English aristocracy, and the welcome which had been given him in England during the *émigration*, were just the qualifications necessary for so delicate a mission.

"I see," added Fouché, "that you can be of very great service to us through your numerous English relations; try to see Lord Wellesley, and approach him so as to be able to tell me whether he would be prepared to listen to overtures that might lead to a reconciliation." Fouché did not explain clearly what was to be the basis of the reconciliation, as was natural, seeing that he was acting without Napoleon's knowledge; he only remarked that "the French, by virtue of controlling the continent as the English controlled the sea, could easily come to an arrangement." When Fagan spoke of some disputed points, the minister contented himself with replying: "The matter can be arranged; Spain is ours and the English can no longer pretend to any rights there.[1] They are powerful enough on the sea; we must have Sicily, for without Sicily we shall never be secure in Naples; we shall restore Pondicherry, though they are not interested in the country."

And Fouché again repeated:

"They are in command of the sea and have no need of any further compensation. It is proverbial that the

only saved by a button against which his adversary's bullet flattened itself.

Owing to the death of the Duke of Portland Mr. Perceval was Prime Minister.

[1] This seemed true at the close of 1809, but was not so for long.

command of the sea implies the command of the land; if we could only get into touch, we could easily come to terms." There was no question about Malta, Holland, Portugal, America, and the Hanseatic towns.

Fouché's intention was to set on foot secret negotiations, and not inform Napoleon of them until they were in progress; as soon as they were transferred from the sphere of secret to that of official diplomacy, it would be easy to settle the various questions at issue in conferences or in an actual Congress. Fouché felt sure that the Emperor's great desire for peace would make him pardon the irregularity of the methods adopted to secure it.[1]

In fact, Fagan was not to discuss this or that point, but was simply to initiate the discussion, and find out whether the English could be approached on the subject of peace. The failure of the negotiations of 1807 and 1808 made it impossible to be sure of this point, for Fouché was fully aware that Napoleon was to blame for their failure, and it was for that reason that he wished to confront his Emperor with negotiations *in esse* by engaging in preliminaries without his knowledge. The new minister, Wellesley, had, justly enough, the reputation of professing a desire for peace, and it

[1] We must not of course look for the explanation of Fouché's conduct in the so-called *Mémoires* published in 1824, which are an apology written by an admirer, but in the papers of the *Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1674, which refer to the matters in which Fagan and Labouchère were concerned, and in the Foreign Office records.

Cf. Louis Madelin, *Fouché, duc d'Otrante*, vol. ii., p. 176.

The negotiations of 1810 were the occasion of no debate in the British Parliament, although, just about this time, they were discussed in several articles in the English papers.

was important to take advantage of that fact without delay.

On the 30th of November, 1809, Fouché sent Fagan a passport for Dunkirk and Boulogne-sur-mer.[1] Five days later he left with a letter from Fouché to Devilliers, the superintendent of police at Boulogne, who was to help him to embark. Despite that, he could not cross the Channel, but made for Dieppe; being no more successful there, he returned to Paris, where he fell ill and remained six weeks in bed. He notified Fouché of his illness, but did not have an interview with him. When somewhat recovered he left for Holland, as from Holland he hoped to find it easier to cross over to England, and stopped at Antwerp. The police-officer advised him to go to Ostend, which he reached on the 19th of January, when he was at last able to embark. On making the British coast between Dover and Margate, he passed himself off as an English officer, and disembarked without any difficulty. As soon as he had arrived in London, he hastened to visit his friend, Lord Yarmouth, and told him the object of his journey. Lord Yarmouth gave him a letter of introduction to the Marquess Wellesley. It was hardly needed, for Fagan knew the minister privately, as two of his cousins had served as aides-de-camp to the Marquess in India.

Wellesley received him cordially. After chatting with him about the state of France, about his family, and a hundred other topics, he made him an appointment for the next day at his private mansion. Fouché's messenger then told Wellesley that he was commis-

[1] *Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1674, Fagan's reports to Fouché.

sioned to approach him about the possibility of a reconciliation. The noble lord replied: "Before you left you saw the Minister of Police;" and added jocosely, "It was a bad way to come."

Passing on to the examination of the actual situation, Wellesley spoke of the means at the disposal of France to conquer Spain. Fagan objected that Spain was already conquered, and that it was so considered even in England. The minister, however, reminded him that he had lived in the country[1] and knew its resources, and that, besides, England was prepared to spend her last crown in saving the country. And he added: "What would Napoleon think if we were to ask him for the finest fortress in France?"

After talking over several old recollections of *émigré* experiences, and the excellent reception that Fagan and his comrades of the Irish brigade had received in England, Wellesley gave him an appointment for the next day but one. They then talked about Spain, and the minister declared that a reconciliation would be impossible as long as some provision was not made for this kingdom.

This attitude was not a new one, and it will be remembered that the negotiations of the autumn of 1808 had come to grief because Napoleon would not admit Spain to the proposed conference. The progress

[1] Appointed Governor of Madras in 1795, Wellesley fought Tippoo Sahib with success and returned to England in 1806, with the title of Marquess. In the beginning of 1809 he was sent as ambassador-extraordinary to the insurrectionary *junta* of Seville and remained there till the autumn of the same year, about eight months. On his return to England he joined the Cabinet as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He was the eldest brother of the Duke of Wellington.

which our arms had made in the country during the last eighteen months did not modify the position taken up by the British Cabinet with regard to the matter. The capture of Oporto by Wellington, Marshal Soult's retreat, the victory of Talavera, and the ever-increasing successes of the guerilla bands were counterbalanced by the surrender of Saragossa, the final conquest of Aragon, and the brilliant victory over the Spaniards at Ocaña on the 18th and 19th of November, 1809.

However, there was a more serious matter than the Spanish question; the English Cabinet knew that Napoleon intended to annex three parts of Holland to France. "We have just heard," said Wellesley, "that Napoleon has given orders for the invasion of Holland;[1] it does not look like making dispositions for peace. We are always ready to consider any proposal coming to us through an official channel. If you will be good enough to call, I will write a note and sign it, but will keep the original; you will take a copy to forward and will sign it in my presence."

Two days later the note was drawn up in these terms:

"In view of the fact that the communication was not official, I can only say that the British Government is ready to receive any proposal which can bring about a reconciliation between the two governments, provided that our allies be included, it being understood that Spain is to be reckoned as an English ally."

This note was not fundamentally different from the

[1] Wellesley alluded to the measures actually put in hand by Napoleon for the conquest of Holland. *Vide infra*, p. 206 *sqq.*

note addressed by Canning to Champagny, on the 28th of October, 1808.[1]

After professing great friendship, Wellesley and Fagan separated, and the next day Fouché's envoy received his passport. He fell ill, however, with an unusually severe chest attack, and was unable to leave London for more than three weeks. Culling-Smith, Wellesley's brother-in-law and Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs, himself saw him into his carriage and said good-bye to him with these significant words: "We shall be very pleased to see you again, or any other person whom the French Government may care to send us."

After passing through Ostend on the 10th of March, Fagan placed Wellesley's note in Fouché's own hands in Paris on the 12th, gave him an account of his journey and emphasized the really peaceful views of the English Cabinet; but declared that it would be impossible for him to return to London without having an official letter formally to accredit him to Wellesley. The Police Minister thanked him warmly, *told him that Napoleon was satisfied*, and added that he would be wanted to leave for London in a week.[2] From that day Fagan heard nothing further. The emissary had behaved with the utmost discretion in London, and had only been to see Lord Yarmouth and his father; no one except those interested got wind of the negotiations, and Napoleon only heard of them at the end of June, in consequence of the court of inquiry that was opened against Fouché.

[1] *Vide* pp. 188, 189.

[2] Fagan's disinterestedness is proved by the fact that he made the journey at his own expense, in the hope of being useful to the Emperor.

CHAPTER XXVIII

LABOUCHÈRE'S FIRST MISSION TO LONDON

BY a singular chance, just at the time when Fagan was bringing Wellesley proposals from Fouché, that is to say, in the last days of January, 1810, another equally secret agent, the Dutchman Labouchère, was preparing to inform the English Government of Napoleon's views.

A few remarks here about Dutch affairs will not be out of place. Napoleon had complained of the conduct of his brother Louis towards France, and had reproached him for not assisting in the maritime war against England: for not closing the Dutch coast to English merchandise: and finally for not repressing the hostility to France which was prevalent in all classes of Dutch society. The result of this ill-feeling was that the Emperor decided simply and solely to annex Holland to the empire and gave the military orders necessary for the purpose. These were the measures which had caused such distress to the British Cabinet in February, 1810. King Louis came to Paris to defend his cause before his brother, reassured him, and promised to satisfy his requirements, and peace was for the moment re-established between them.[1]

[1] Cf. Félix Rocquain, *Napoléon et le roi Louis*, from the sources in the *Archives Nationales*, pp. 233 *sqq.*; *Mémoire sur la cour*

Napoleon communicated to Louis the means he had devised for bringing England to terms. He would threaten the total annexation of Holland; for though our occupation of Spain, when almost completed, as in January, 1810, had not sufficed to move the London Cabinet, yet the occupation of Holland would, it was thought, be certain to produce this result; the proposed marriage with the sister of Alexander, or, failing her, with the sister of the Emperor of Austria, would result in an alliance with one or other of these Powers, and place Napoleon in a position which could not be attacked by England. The Emperor was thus pursuing the usual system of threatening his enemy and intimidating him so as to force him to sue for peace. The failure of the method in 1808 did not prevent Napoleon from trying it again two years later. Only this time Holland was to be employed to cause alarm; the blow would fall with the greater force on England, because, thanks to King Louis' toleration, she sold a large quantity of her colonial products in that country.

It was plain that Napoleon could not openly and directly offer England the alternative of making peace or of seeing Holland become a French possession. He therefore conceived the idea of sending the information through the Dutch themselves. Fouché, whose penetration allowed nothing to escape him, soon learned of his master's designs, and perhaps congratulated himself on having sent Fagan to Wellesley, and thereby prepared the way for the Dutch message. Consequently he wished the second messenger to be as

de Louis Napoléon et sur la Hollande, 1828, pp. 70 *sqq.*; *Documents historiques sur la gouvernement de la Hollande*, vol. iii.

devoted to his interests as the first, and consulted Ouvrard, who had just left the prison of Vincennes to attend to financial business, about choosing a suitable agent for his purpose.

Ouvrard suggested Pierre-César Labouchère as the agent he required. Labouchère was at the head of one of the most important banking houses in Amsterdam, and the son-in-law of Sir Francis Baring, who was living in London, and was one of the directors of the East India Company, and had a high reputation in governmental circles in England. And so, through his high position and his connections Labouchère seemed in possession of all the qualities necessary for success.

Fouché and Labouchère had already become acquainted some fifteen months previously; but Ouvrard served to recall him to the Police Minister's recollection in January, 1810. Napoleon consented to accept the services of Labouchère, who happened to be in Paris at the time.

As the initiative was to appear to emanate from the Dutch minister and not from France, it was necessary for Labouchère to leave ostensibly from The Hague, and to receive his final instructions from that town. A note drawn up by Champagny and by de Roel, the Dutch Minister for Foreign Affairs, then in Paris, served as a basis; the note was to be read in the Council of the Dutch Ministers.[1]

King Louis addressed the following letter to these dignitaries; it was inspired by Napoleon and contained his views on Dutch affairs.

[1] *Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1674.

"January, 1810.

"I have certain knowledge that France has definitely decided to annex Holland in spite of all considerations, and that she is convinced that it is impossible to permit the Dutch independence so long as the maritime war continues. In this cruel uncertainty there is but one hope for us—that a maritime peace may be negotiated. That alone can avert the imminent peril which is threatening us. . . . It is possible that the English may in their own interests avoid a blow which would be so fatal to them. I look to you to strain every nerve to bring home to the English Government the importance of the steps they should take. Use every argument and every consideration, which may occur to you, to influence them in the matter. Take the necessary measures yourselves, without mentioning my name; but you must act at once. Send a safe and reliable business man to London, and remember that I wish him to see me immediately he returns. Let me know when he is likely to come, for there is no time to lose. We have only a few days left. Two army corps are marching on the kingdom. Inform me of the action you take on receipt of this letter, and when I may hope for a reply from England."[1]

De Roel and Labouchère left Paris at the close of January, and on the 2nd of February Labouchère embarked at Brielle.

But what were the conditions under which the secret mission, in which Napoleon had such great confidence, was to be undertaken? The best means of bringing matters to a successful issue were undoubtedly for Napoleon to offer acceptable terms to the English Cabinet, no matter whether he were deal-

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 605, fol. 3.

ing with the maritime war or with continental complications. It would have been possible to initiate negotiations by making the most of a few well-chosen concessions, and by proposing some satisfactory arrangement of the Spanish question. Had negotiations once been commenced there is little doubt but that, owing to Wellesley's desire for peace, they would have been satisfactorily concluded. But the difficulty was to get into touch. Napoleon was now most anxious to do so, for his approaching marriage made him set a high value on peace. The following document will show whether Labouchère's instructions made this aim possible of attainment.

"He shall inform the English Government that the destiny of Holland depends on the arrangements made by England to arrive at a speedy peace with France, or at least to bring about a real change in the measures adopted by the said government in the attitude adopted towards the commerce and shipping of neutrals.[1]

"Labouchère shall use the channels he may find most convenient to inform the English Government of this state of affairs, and he is at liberty to state that he is authorized by the Dutch Government in the matter."

It would have been more honest to state "with the authorization of the French Government."

"He shall then try to show the English Government how greatly it is to England's interest that Holland should not fall under the sovereignty of the

[1] This is an allusion to the English Orders in Council of the 11th of November, 1807, which were a reply to the Berlin decree of the 21st of November, 1806.

French empire. If he find the English Government persuaded of this fact, or if he succeed in making them realize it, he shall try to persuade them to contribute to the maintenance of the political existence of Holland, by showing readiness to join in negotiations for a general peace, or supposing that such negotiations cannot be opened and concluded in a short space of time, let England give satisfactory assurances of her intentions to make some changes in the system adopted by the English Orders in Council in November, 1807, and in the measures which have been consequent thereupon.

"He shall add that in the event of a relaxation or change in the aforesaid system being adopted, there is reason to hope that, besides the non-occupation of Holland, the war, if it must still continue, will assume at last a milder and less disastrous form than has been the case for the last few years, and that there will be more likelihood of a reconciliation, for there will then be no reason for the Emperor to keep in force the Berlin and Milan decrees.

"If however the English Government, after lending an ear to his suggestions, is unwilling to enter into definite explanations before having positive information of the attitude of the French Government in the matter, he shall ask the English Government to state whether it will formally consent to enter into negotiations for peace, or at least to bring about a change in the said Orders in Council of November, 1807, provided that the aforementioned suggestions be duly ratified and more especially that Holland be evacuated by the French troops and the *status quo* before the late invasion of Zealand[1] by the English be re-established; other conditions on which the English Government considers that it must insist before undertaking the proposed measures should be added in

[1] The Walcheren expedition of 1809.

order that a definite character may be given to the desires of the English Government, before England is notified of the intentions of the French Government.

"Whatever may be the reply of the English Government to these representations, provided that it does not exclude all hope of arriving at the proposed end, and provided that circumstances allow, the agent shall prolong his stay in London and meanwhile forward a detailed report to the undersigned. If it should seem likely to conduce to the successful issue of the object proposed to bring the reply to King Louis at Paris, he shall return to Paris but shall pass through Holland on his way, and under no circumstances shall he travel direct from England to France.

(Signed) "VAN DER HEIM. J. H. MOLLERUS.[1]

"Amsterdam, 1st February, 1810."

[1] These instructions, with the letter of King Louis to his ministers and Wellesley's reply, were published in the *Moniteur* of the 15th December, 1810, together with a part of the documents touching the earlier English negotiations, but without any explanatory comments; the isolated documents give a false idea of the preliminary negotiations and of the reasons for their failure.

CHAPTER XXIX

FAILURE OF LABOUCHÈRE'S MISSION

WE have thought it necessary to quote these instructions in detail because they enable us to form an impartial judgment on the conduct of Napoleon and the English Cabinet in the matter.

The instructions are of a threatening character, and contain no proposal calculated to induce the English to open negotiations. "If you do not revoke the Orders in Council of 1807," said Napoleon, "I shall invade and annex Holland; but if, on the contrary, these measures are revoked *promptly*" (the word occurs twice), "I shall look on it as a proof of your goodwill, and will forward you proposals, about whose character I at present say nothing."

Napoleon cannot have forgotten that the Orders in Council were but the reply, and a long-delayed reply, to his Berlin decrees; as a matter of justice it was surely for Napoleon to be the first to repeal the coercive measures, which he had been the first to enforce. The instructions, which Labouchère was to communicate to Wellesley, might have been drawn up for the express purpose of exasperating British pride.

Labouchère made a rapid journey. Landing at Yarmouth on the 5th, he reached London on the evening of the 6th, and on the morning of the 7th he

asked Wellesley for an audience. He was received in the evening, and welcomed with evident satisfaction. The Dutch envoy communicated his instructions and enlarged on the main question, pointing out Holland's danger if England did not withdraw her Orders in Council. Wellesley's only answer was that the Cabinet would consider the matter. Having heard nothing by the 11th Labouchère asked for a reply, and saw the minister again on the following day.

The two ministers had a long conversation; Wellesley began by declaring that it was impossible for England to withdraw any of the Orders in Council so long as the Berlin decrees, which had provoked them, remained in force. Labouchère could not deny that it was only just that Napoleon, who had initiated coercive measures against the trade of neutrals and of the English, should give proof of his desire to treat by relaxing their severity. Again, as the system in force was the actual basis of England's policy, and as it offered the most efficacious means, in Wellesley's opinion, of weakening the resources of France, it would be imprudent to change it, for Labouchère was not in possession of the conditions on which France would be willing to treat, but simply bore a threatening message. The minister mistrusted this attitude, and considered besides that it was by no means certain that a declaration from him would lead to useful results. Yet he said that the English Government would not refuse to consider any proposed agreement, but that it was convinced that for the moment Napoleon had no serious wish for a peace which could in any way be reconciled with England's avowed principles. Far from so doing, he was making fresh arrangements to insure

the definite conquest of Spain and Portugal, and these arrangements were bound to prove under any circumstances the most serious obstacle to any negotiations which might be initiated.

Being unable to enter into a discussion on the conditions under which Napoleon intended to conclude peace—for he was himself ignorant of them—Labouchère tried to convince the English minister of the advantage of saving Holland. Wellesley, however, remarked dryly, that in view of the many considerations affecting England, the Dutch interest could only claim a position of very secondary importance. At last the English minister dictated the following reply, dated the 12th of February.[1]

"The unfortunate position of Holland has long been regarded in this country with feelings of compassion, . . . but Holland cannot expect this country to make a sacrifice of her own interests and her honour.

"The nature of Monsieur Labouchère's communication hardly admits of our making any proposal concerning a general peace; it does not even furnish us with a motive for repeating the sentiments which the English Government has so often expressed on the subject.

"It may however be remarked that the French Government has not shown the slightest sign of any willingness to make peace or to abate one whit of those pretensions which have hitherto made the desire of the English Government to terminate the war of none effect.

"The same observation applies to the conduct of the French Government in the war it is making on trade,

[1] F. O. R., England, vol. 605, fol. 8 *sqq.*

a war in which France has been the aggressor, and which has been pursued with unflagging relentlessness. It is not the case, as was stated in the note forwarded by M. Labouchère, that the English Orders in Council were the cause of the French decrees against the commercial shipping of neutrals; on the contrary, the English dispositions were the direct consequence of the French decrees. The decrees are still in force, no steps have been taken for their repeal. It is not reasonable to expect that we should relax the arrangements made for our own defence, which are essential to our safety, and which alone can shelter us from the blows aimed at us by the enemy, simply because he is suffering from the consequences of the measures he has himself taken, while he does not manifest the slightest desire to abandon those measures."

Sir Francis Baring, Labouchère's father-in-law, had secured a friendly reception for him from Lord Wellesley, as was quite natural, seeing that the noble lord was indebted to him for his position, his fortune and his credit. He told his son-in-law what it was impossible for Wellesley to tell him: that the fate of Holland was a matter of indifference to the English Cabinet, and that the constant obstacle to peace was the Spanish settlement.

After receiving the note which had been dictated to him on the 12th of February, Labouchère felt that there was no business to detain him in London; he returned to Holland, and while remaining at Amsterdam, advised King Louis, who was still in Paris, of the result of his mission.

The news reached Napoleon on the 24th of February. Far from realizing that he was under a moral obliga-

tion to repeal the Berlin decrees, if he wished the English to repeal the Orders in Council, he at once dictated to one of his secretaries a proposed treaty with Holland, by way of an answer, if answer it can be called, to the English note.

"Until such time as the British Government shall solemnly abandon the position taken up in the Orders in Council in 1807, a veto is placed upon all trade between the ports of Holland and England."

Article 2 ordered the occupation of Holland by 18,000 French under Marshal Oudinot, and by Article 6 a cession was made to the French Empire of all the country south of the Waal, that is to say of Dutch Brabant, of all Zealand and of a part of Gelderland. The final treaty authorizing this proposal was signed on the 16th, and ratified on the 31st of March.

On this occasion Napoleon gave a fresh proof of his extraordinary inconstancy. On the 16th he signed a treaty annexing a part of Holland to his empire and thus deliberately renounced the idea of entering into negotiations with England, but two days later, after thinking over Labouchère's mission, he again read over the report he had presented and sent the following note to Louis:

"I have read Labouchère's report with considerable care and think it desirable that you should again send him to London, this time not as a Dutch envoy, but as coming from yourself. He will have orders to make a statement in accordance with the terms of the enclosed note and will bear an unsigned document similar in effect to that delivered by him on the previous occasion. Finally, if the English Govern-

ment has the smallest desire for peace, it may make use of M. Labouchère or any other agent to forward its proposals. It is most important that Labouchère should not have an official character; under no circumstance is he to produce a signed document or one written in a handwriting that is familiar."

It would appear that Napoleon was ashamed of attempting a reconciliation with the English, and this is not to be wondered at, in view of the many failures for which he had been responsible. The unsigned document starts as follows: "The King, at the cost of many prayers and sacrifices has secured the independence of all the country lying to the right of the Rhine, an arrangement which is very much to England's advantage. But French troops are in possession of all the approaches, which are now under Customs' regulations, and it will consequently be impossible for any boat to sail unchallenged into Holland." Napoleon goes on to ask for the repeal of the Orders in Council of 1807; in return for this the French will evacuate Holland and perhaps the Hanseatic towns; he makes, however, no offer to repeal the Berlin and Milan decrees. He speaks with great satisfaction of the flourishing state of France, and concludes with the customary threat against England. "Through not making peace before, England has lost Naples, Spain, Portugal and the outlet of Trieste. If she now delays in making peace, it is evident that she will lose Holland and the Hanseatic towns, and that it will be very difficult for her to defend Sicily."[1]

Before ordering Labouchère to leave for London,

[1] Napoleon's Correspondence, 16352, and Rocquain, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

King Louis wished to see him. In the early days of April he left Paris, and on his arrival in Amsterdam, had a long conversation with Labouchère, who assured him that Lord Wellesley was sincere in his desire for peace, but that the majority of the Council and especially the King of England thought differently, because the continuance of war was enriching the nation: that they were indifferent about what happened to Holland or even Hanover: that the enthusiasm manifested by Holland to France, after the Walcheren expedition, had alienated English sympathy: and finally that the affairs of Spain, as was already known, constituted the greatest obstacle to peace. Labouchère was also of opinion that in the event of a change of ministry, France would have a better chance of coming to an understanding with its successor.

Louis, being thus sufficiently enlightened, hastened to send Napoleon an account of his interview with Labouchère and asked for instructions about the fresh mission with which that envoy was to be entrusted.[1] The Emperor read his letter, again changed his opinion and definitely gave up the idea of making use of Labouchère, and even of trying fresh negotiations with England.

Such was the result of Labouchère's first mission, which was even more sterile than Fagan's; it is a curious fact that these two envoys saw Wellesley at an interval of but a few days. Fagan was received during the last few days of January, Labouchère on the 7th and 12th of February. By a curious coin-

[1] Rocquain, *op. cit.*, Louis to Napoleon, Utrecht, 17th April, 1810.

cidence Fagan was lying ill in London during the whole time that Labouchère was staying there; he did not return to France until the 10th of March, that is to say about a month after the return of the Dutch envoy.

CHAPTER XXX

FOUCHÉ'S FRESH PLAN, DEVISED WITHOUT NAPOLEON'S KNOWLEDGE

ABSORBED in the preparations for his marriage with Marie Louise, Napoleon soon forgot all ideas of peace. Thinking himself more powerful than ever, he wished to bring England to terms by increasing the strictness of the Continental Blockade and by the final conquest of Spain and Portugal, where he sent Masséna with a considerable army. He lost sight completely of Labouchère and the negotiations of the previous month.

It seems incomprehensible that Fouché should have chosen this moment to initiate, *without Napoleon's knowledge*, and against his wishes, a third set of secret negotiations, with a view to a reconciliation with England. This third attempt is by no means the least curious of the three. The Minister of Police had Fagan and Labouchère as willing agents; both were popular with Lord Wellesley, and equally capable of bringing negotiations of this kind to a satisfactory conclusion. Fagan had been for some time in Paris, but his bad health made it impossible for Fouché to employ him again. Labouchère, owing to his connection with the influential Sir Francis Baring, was very likely to get a hearing in London. The difficulty was

to send him back to London without awakening the Emperor's suspicions. Fouché hit on the brilliant idea of employing Labouchère without making him leave Amsterdam. Baring would forward Fouché's own views to Wellesley, after receiving them through Labouchère.

And so it happened that Fagan conducted the first secret negotiations, Labouchère the second, while Baring was intrusted with the third.

In order to get safely into touch with Labouchère, Fouché made use of Ouvrard, who left for Amsterdam on the very plausible pretext of financial business. He brought Labouchère the following short note from the Minister of Police, undated, but written about the middle of March:[1]

"It appears that he is now, though only on the occasion of his marriage, ready to yield on the following points: Malta, Sicily, Naples, the Ionian provinces, the Hanseatic towns, Holland, Portugal, and the greater part of the Spanish colonies."[2]

[1] Ouvrard, in his memoirs, published in 1827, tells in his own way the part he played in the negotiations. He argues his good faith and his belief that he was acting in the Emperor's name. He accepted the mission unwillingly, and when pressed to do so by Fouché; he admits having taken Labouchère the proposal made in this short letter, and also his memorandum to the Emperor of the 22nd of March, of which we shall speak later. He adds that Meneval, the Emperor's secretary, was most alarmed, but yet showed it to his master (vol. i., pp. 153-168). The documents in the *Archives Nationales* and the Foreign Office records confirm some of his statements but make it appear that he was Fouché's accomplice in deceiving Labouchère.

[2] In his examination on the 28th of June following, Ouvrard denied that this note was given him by Fouché to be forwarded to England (*Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1674).

This note, which affected a confidential form, and which seemed to be come from one who knew the Emperor's secret thoughts, made a great impression on Labouchère. Far from suspecting Fouché's trickery, he thought he was admitted into the Emperor's confidence and intrusted with a more important mission, under far wider conditions than those of February. Ouvrard, who was building up a scheme of speculations based on the likelihood of peace, gave him every encouragement and succeeded in deceiving him.

Fouché's short note is the first document which refers to the fresh negotiations and is their source.

Labouchère hastened to write to his father-in-law, Sir Francis Baring, on the 21st of March, to inform him that there had never been a more favourable opportunity for treating, despite the recent annexation of a part of Holland to France, and that if England were sincere in desiring peace, the chance should not be missed. Napoleon's marriage was a circumstance which made a new system possible, a system which was much more similar to earlier ideas. The conditions mentioned in Fouché's note, if only a satisfactory position could be found for Ferdinand VII., about whom some decision must be arrived at, would form a satisfactory basis to enable Baring to open negotiations with Wellesley.

To this letter a note in detail was added for Lord Wellesley, in which the change which was taking place in the Emperor's ideas was insisted on:

"From a conqueror he is becoming a preserver; the first result of his marriage with Marie Louise will be that he will make an offer of peace to England. It is to this nation's interest to make peace, for it has

command of the sea; on the contrary, it is really to the interest of France to continue war, which allows her to expand indefinitely and make a fresh fleet, as cannot be done once peace is established. Why does not the English Cabinet make a proposal to France to destroy the United States of America, and by making them again dependent on England, persuade Napoleon to lend his aid to destroy the life-work of Louis XVI?[1] Let Ferdinand VII. be given the kingdom of Mexico and the Spanish colonies in America. His fate will thus be satisfactorily determined, and a solution found for the Spanish question. Finally, peace will allow England to pour her industrial products over the continent. If only for this motive, it is to her interest to conclude peace, and to flatter Napoleon's vanity by recognizing his work and his imperial title."

The position was cleverly set forth; the letter laid stress on the material advantages that would accrue to England through peace, including the recovery of the United States of America, and pointed out that peace would be far from being an advantage to France.

The day that this note, drawn up by Ouvrard, left for London, the celebrated financier addressed Napoleon a fresh memorandum in favour of peace.[2] It was a paraphrase of his note to Wellesley, and was intended to prepare Napoleon for the solution indicated in the note. A judicious division of Central and South America would admit of the termination of the Spanish question, which was the real obstacle to peace. Ferdinand VII. would share the Spanish colonies with

[1] The U.S.A. through their law of embargo had just quarrelled with France and Great Britain. It was said that the King of England hated the Americans more than he hated Napoleon.

[2] He had already made several representations on the subject, especially that of the 23rd of March, 1807.

the Bourbons, and Cuba would remain in the possession of France. From this point, which would act as a valuable nucleus, the French would be able on some future occasion to set about the conquest of North America. Ferdinand VII., the King of Mexico, would marry a princess of the house of Bonaparte; and in North America thrones could be found for those members of the House who were not yet provided for. As master of the two Americas, Napoleon could dictate to England a peace in conformity with his ideas.

By an extraordinary contradiction Ouvrard made Labouchère propose to Wellesley an understanding with France, which should bring the United States under the British Crown; at the same time he proposed to Napoleon to enter into an alliance with the Spanish colonies, and to undertake the conquest of the same United States, but to the advantage of France.

To send this memorandum to the Emperor was most imprudent; it attracted his attention to the author and his stay in Holland. In view of Napoleon's suspicious character and his powers of penetration, it was certain that he would guess something of the secret negotiations between Fouché and Wellesley. The result proved this to be so.

As was only natural, Ouvrard sent Fouché the copy of his note to Baring of the 22nd of March, and in order to encourage Labouchère to continue his negotiations, and still further to give him the impression that he was acting in harmony with the Emperor, the Minister of Police sent him, through Ouvrard, the following note on the 5th of April, which may be considered in the nature of instructions:

"Your servant arrived on the 30th; his departure was delayed by the marriage festivities.

"The note recently sent by M. Labouchère [*i.e.* the note of March the 22nd to Wellesley, composed by Ouvrard] has received our most careful attention; it has met with approval, and shows an excellent spirit, tact, and an appreciation of the situation. The reply is waited for impatiently, and you are invited not to lose a moment in forwarding it."

Fouché then advised Ouvrard that a Baron Kolly, an Irishman, who had been sent by the English Cabinet to arrange for the escape of Ferdinand VII. from Valençay, had disembarked at Quiberon with two agents. They were followed, arrested, and put in confinement. Wellesley was for the moment ignorant of their arrest. Labouchère was to inform him of the fact, and tell him that out of consideration for him Kolly would be set at liberty in exchange for some French prisoners. Napoleon knew nothing of all this, and Fouché assumed the responsibility of arranging it to fit in with his own views.

On receipt of this communication, Labouchère hurriedly wrote off two letters, dated the 10th of April. The first was addressed to Baring, and confirmed the note of the 22nd of March, and was an appeal to Baring to use all his influence to persuade Wellesley to send a favourable answer to the proposals concerning North America.

The second note, which was sent to the minister himself through Baring, was a fresh appeal in favour of Holland, who could only be saved by peace from her unfortunate position. Labouchère explained the attitude of the French Government in its relations with Kolly:

"Nothing, I feel sure, could be better fitted to bring this disagreeable business to a satisfactory conclusion than a frank, cordial advance, and the expression of a real readiness to treat, however difficult it may appear to be to come to an understanding as to terms. Certain general preliminary principles might be suggested, and it would soon be manifest whether or no France has a sincere desire to put an end to the calamities of war; and if Your Excellency approves of this method of private correspondence, I imagine that, in view of the respect attaching to your name, it might be possible to look for counter-declarations of sufficiently clear and satisfactory a character, to change these confidential communications into official proposals."[1]

Labouchère's note and letter of the 22nd of March only reached London on the 5th of April. On their receipt Sir Francis Baring warned Wellesley that he had important papers for him. At midnight the minister sent for them, and the following day brought them on to his old colleague, Canning.[2] The two statesmen agreed not to show these communications to the Council until they had discussed them together. Their discussions lasted from the 8th to the 14th of April, and they finally agreed that the proposed American settlement, and the untrammelled outlet for the great stores of colonial produce, in the event of peace, would form a very advantageous basis for England, and should be submitted for the Council's approval.

All these negotiations of April, 1810, are of an ex-

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 605, fols. 20 and 21.

[2] Canning was no longer a member of the Cabinet in 1810; the cause of Wellesley's action was that he was on terms of close intimacy with Canning and had been suggested by Canning as his successor.

traordinary character. The English Cabinet supposed that Baring and Labouchère were simply acting for Napoleon, and they seriously discussed the most absurd proposals. Thinking they were in presence of official communications, which might lead to peace, they were in reality the dupes of Fouché. Fouché alone was acting and was misleading the negotiators and the English Cabinet. His excuse was, that he was so eager for peace that the end seemed to justify the means, and that he believed that Napoleon would be the first to congratulate him if he succeeded in initiating a discussion. The Police Minister was unaware that Napoleon had abandoned all idea of a maritime peace and was now wishing to make another attempt to destroy his inveterate enemy.

CHAPTER XXXI

FOUCHÉ'S PLAN DISCOVERED BY NAPOLEON. UNLOOKED-FOR CONSEQUENCES

THE Easter vacation had interrupted political life in England. On the 17th of April Wellesley and Baring received letters dated the 10th of April from Labouchère, as we have mentioned above, and one of which, addressed to Baring, referred to Baron Kolly. The condescension shown to Kolly by Fouché, and which the English Council attributed wrongly to the Emperor, produced an excellent impression, and they discussed the note referring to America in the most conciliatory spirit, *and decided that that basis would meet their desires.*

It was the first occasion on which the British Cabinet considered that it would be possible to enter upon negotiations with France, and this result must be attributed to Wellesley's zeal. On rising from the Cabinet meeting the minister hurried off to give Baring the good news. Not finding him at home, he took the trouble of calling three times and discussed afresh with him all the considerations which had occupied the Council. Actuated by kindlier feelings towards France, the Marquess finally declared that the Council was fully sensible of the generous treatment Kolly had received, and added that he wished to know on what

lines he might recognize the action.[1] The noble lord appeared to attach little importance to the person of Kolly, whom he termed a poor creature, but he showed how greatly he appreciated the conduct of the French Government on this occasion.

The first of Baring's negotiations exceeded Ouvrard's most hopeful expectations, and he told Fouché that an official communication from the British Ministry in reply to Labouchère's notes of the 22nd of March and the 10th of April was anxiously expected. A few days later, on the 27th of April, Ouvrard left Amsterdam to get fresh instructions from Fouché. On the 8th of May Baring saw Wellesley again, and he told him:

"That it would be no use for any one to come to England, whose powers were not clear and incontestable.

"That it would be useless to open negotiations unless it were clearly understood that certain indispensable points could be determined by the parties in the course of negotiations.

"That it would be useless and even dangerous to open negotiations with the certainty, or even the likelihood, that insurmountable objections would be met with in the fundamental principles."

These declarations seemed to show that the English Cabinet had some doubts about the negotiations actually in progress. In any case they were rather obscure. And so Baring asked whether, in the event of a suitable person being sent over, he would be received.

[1] *Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1674. Report from Ouvrard to Fouché, and Baring's letter to Labouchère, dated the 24th of April, 1810.

"Yes," replied Wellesley, "he would certainly be received in accordance with the extent of his powers, provided that they allowed us a reasonable hope of a satisfactory conclusion."

Wellesley went on to assure Baring that he could rely on him to support the objects they had in view in the British Cabinet, and that he would gladly receive a duly accredited negotiator.

Fouché would perhaps have been able to find means of sending an agent to London to continue the negotiations officially, but he was now forced to reveal the whole matter to the Emperor. Napoleon, preoccupied as he was with his marriage and his journey to Belgium and Holland, had forgotten Ouvrard's memorandum of the 22nd of March. At Anvers he happened to meet the financier, who was returning to Paris on the 22nd of April, as we have seen above.

Remembering the memorandum of the 22nd of March, he at once focussed his ideas, and realizing that there was something unusual about Ouvrard's behaviour, he ordered King Louis to inform him through Labouchère of what had been happening in the last two months, and to forward him documents referring to the matter. Labouchère gave an account of the negotiations in writing. He admitted his letters to Wellesley and Baring, written on the 10th of April, but said nothing about his note dated the 27th of March.[2] In the course of an interview he was more explicit, and gave the King proofs of his good faith. He thought he was acting under Napoleon's orders;

[1] *Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1674. Baring to Labouchère, 8th May, 1810.

[2] *Ibid.* Labouchère to King Louis, 8th May, 1810.

three days previously Ouvrard's letter from Paris had begun with these words: "Your letter has been shown to the Emperor who praised it and found it perfect."

When Labouchere received orders to communicate the whole matter to the King of Holland, he hastened to advise Ouvrard, and asked for formal authorization to continue his negotiations with London.[1]

Ouvrard, who perhaps did not realize the criminal character of his actions, and who thought that Napoleon would finally approve of the secret arrangements, entreated Fouché to allow Labouchère to continue his negotiations with Wellesley through Baring, or even to send him to London, accredited with the powers necessary for negotiations, as had been requested by the English Minister. He emphasized the ground gained since Labouchère's first mission in February, when they had been met with an absolute refusal. No one was in a better position than Labouchère to successfully resume negotiations.

In conclusion Ouvrard suggested to Fouché instructions to be given to Labouchère, and proposed a basis on which peace could be made between France and England, to wit: Joseph should keep possession of Spain on condition that the United States should again become an English possession, and that Central and South America should be shared between Ferdinand VII. and the late King of Naples.[2]

Napoleon was furious when King Louis advised him of the plan which had been devised by Fouché and

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 605, fol. 31. Labouchère to Ouvrard, 8th and 9th May, 1810.

[2] *Archives Nationales*, AFiv 1674. Ouvrard's confidential notes to Fouché, 14th, 19th, and 28th May, 1810.

Ouvrard. He held a meeting of the Council, on the 2nd of June, at St. Cloud; dismissed Fouché from his post of Minister of Police and, as he wished to know the extent and the details of the secret negotiations, he had Ouvrard arrested. He spared Labouchère, whose good faith was evident. The papers found with Ouvrard put Napoleon in possession of all which had been happening during the last six months. Fagan's January mission was revealed to him in the cross-examination of this agent; knowledge of it increased his exasperation and drove him to extreme measures. He took vengeance by exiling Fouché to Aix-en-Provence.

In reviewing the situation, and especially after reading Baring's letters to Labouchère, which deal with England's desire for peace, one cannot but wonder whether it would not have been wiser for Napoleon, in the interests of peace, to conceal his rage and allow the continuation of negotiations which had a chance of success.

We shall not try to justify the conduct of the Minister of Police, but in view of the fact that a foreign cabinet was concerned, considerations of the most elementary prudence should have brought it about, that even if Napoleon did not wish to follow Labouchère's negotiations, he should at least have abstained from raising a scandal. Had he really wished to bring his quarrel with England to a close he should have acted with greater circumspection and less haste. But it appears certain that his wish for peace, which had only been momentarily excited by his marriage, had now vanished for ever, as is conclusively proved by his attitude in the Ouvrard-Fouché case.

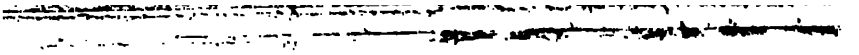
The English Cabinet felt the blow keenly; they

were covered with ridicule in the eyes of the Opposition and the War Party, tricked as they had been by Fouché and Labouchère. Baring and Wellesley had been concerned in a venture whereby their reputation suffered, and they decided that it was impossible to treat seriously with a man like Napoleon, and from that moment they modified their political attitude.

The result of the publicity given to the Fouché affair was greater than was generally supposed; it made impossible any reconciliation between Napoleon and the English, and insured the triumph of that English party which was in favour of carrying the war to its bitter end. So true is it that wounds dealt to a nation's as to an individual's pride, inflict the keenest suffering.[1]

[1] C. F. Pearce, *Memoirs and Correspondence of the Marquess Wellesley*, 3 vols., London, 1846. The author in describing the negotiations of 1810 has simply translated (vol. iii., pp. 88-89) into English pp. 416 and 417 of vol. i. of the *Mémoires de Fouché*. The explanation there given is quite untrue.

It is regrettable that Pearce's work, which is classical in England, should use as its exclusive reference for a question that has a grave bearing on Wellesley's conduct, a book which was recognized as false on the day of its appearance. Alison, *op. cit.*, vol. ix., pp. 77-78, also relies on the *Mémoires* of Fouché and Ouvrard. His account does not tally with the authentic documents we have quoted above. Walter Scott, *op. cit.*, vol. viii., pp. 66-67, is even more inaccurate. He mixes up Ouvrard and Fagan.



PART V

THE MORLAIX NEGOTIATIONS, 1810

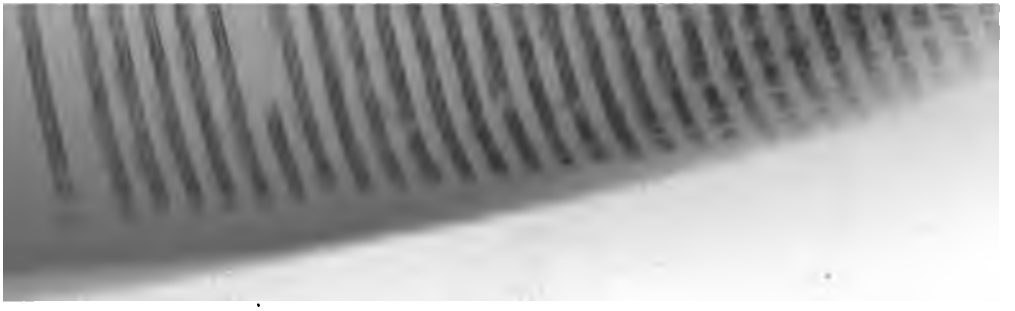
CHAPTER XXXII

WELLESLEY'S ADVANCES

FOR a long time the British Government, in the correspondence between the Transport Office and M. Rivière, the head of the 5th ministerial office of the Admiralty, had expressed a wish to undertake the exchange of the prisoners of war. At the outset the Emperor signified his readiness to agree to this proposal, but imposed three conditions which were to be accepted before he would entertain negotiations.

In the first place the garrison of Cape Hayti, which had capitulated on the stipulation that it should be sent back to Europe, was to be set at liberty; it was still being detained in England contrary to the right of nations and in defiance of the treaty; secondly, the English, who had been arrested in France on the outbreak of hostilities in 1803, should be included in the exchange: finally, allowance was to be made for the Hanoverian army which capitulated in 1803, and which was set at liberty on condition of not serving before being exchanged.

The English Government did not then see its way to agree to these fair terms; but in 1804 it proposed to accept the offer. Napoleon did not give the request all the attention it deserved, so completely was his mind occupied with his vast schemes; five years passed by



and on the 14th of October, 1809, a letter from the Transport Office to the Minister of the Admiralty announced the British Government's acquiescence in the conditions proposed by the Emperor regarding the garrison of Cape Hayti, and expressed a wish to open serious negotiations.

Napoleon replied on the 22nd of November that he wanted a general exchange of prisoners on both sides, and that he thought it would be well to include the English allies. He added that the prisoners could be ransomed, and that the nation which had the greater number, would receive a certain specified sum of money in compensation. The Emperor, in fact, desired to renew the arrangement made on the 12th of March, 1780, between France and England. It would have been advantageous to him, for in exchange for metallic specie, of which he had an abundance, he would have at once recovered all the French prisoners.

The Marquess Wellesley, whose desire for peace was well known, found this proposal waiting for him, when he took over the Foreign Office, and eagerly seized the opportunity of entering into negotiations. He saw that there was a chance of extending them and leading up to a proposal of peace. Napoleon was actuated by the same motives. It is well worth while to consider, what were the misunderstandings which prevented Napoleon and Wellesley, who had the same interests at heart, from coming to an agreement.

Wellesley's first reply was to the effect that he was opposed to the system of ransom; he did not mention the English allies in his despatch. It was evident that in so thorny a matter no result could be arrived at by an interchange of despatches, and so

the English minister spontaneously resolved to send a negotiator to France to try to settle the question on the spot. Labouchère had just left London after having brought Lord Wellesley the proposals for peace; can it be that he suggested this significant advance to the noble lord? It is possible that this was so, and in any case it may be considered as an epilogue to his journey to England and as its first result.

On the 14th of April, 1810, news was received of the nomination of Colin Alexander Mackenzie as negotiator, and twenty-four hours later it was announced that he had disembarked at Morlaix. The police officer of the harbour had allowed him to land, but had posted two sentinels at his door.

On receipt of this intelligence the Emperor did not lose a moment, but named M. Moustier, the secretary for the Saxon legation, who happened to be in Paris, to confer with the English representative. Moustier reached Morlaix on the 24th of April, after travelling incessantly for sixty-five hours. Without any delay he called on Mackenzie, whom he found in bed; preliminary negotiations were at once opened.

The British envoy was a man of about thirty, with charming manners, excellently informed, wealthy, related to the English nobility, and a friend of Lord Wellesley. After serving four campaigns and reaching the rank of major, Mackenzie had left the service. Wishing to visit France in 1803, he had been prevented from doing so by the war and turned his attention to other countries. He travelled through Italy, Sicily, the Greek archipelago, Turkey, and finally Persia, where he served in the ranks of the

Russian army. In 1807 Alexander asked him to resume his service, but Mackenzie refused and returned to England.

On Junot's capitulation at Cintra, Mackenzie was chosen because of his old connection with Russia, to serve as an intermediary between the Russian admiral, Siniavine, and the English Government. Later on he went on a secret mission to Heligoland to form a commercial company.

Lord Wellesley could not have made a wiser choice than Mackenzie for the negotiation of the exchange of prisoners.

CHAPTER XXXIII

STATE OF THE PRISONERS. THE EMPEROR'S PROPOSALS

THE statistics relating to the prisoners were as follow in 1810.

French prisoners detained in England	41,000
Sent from England to France in exchange	2,680
Total	43,680
English prisoners detained in France	11,000
Sent from France to England in exchange	3,694
Total	14,694
To this number must be added the Hanoverian army, which capitulated in 1803	17,306
Total	32,000

In accordance with this estimate we owed England 11,680 prisoners to exactly balance the gross totals.

But in the first place the 17,000 Hanoverians were not confined in French fortresses, for they had been set free on condition that they should not again take arms until exchanged. Many remained faithful to this engagement; others had gradually passed into the ranks of the English army, which did not refuse their assistance.

If then Napoleon could count the 17,000 Hanoverians as English prisoners in strict law, yet, in point of fact, they did not exist, for he had not got them in possession, and so in reality there was a balance of 28,986 prisoners to the English credit. This number could easily be made up by including the Sicilians and Spanish who were detained in our fortresses, but it was doubtful whether any such arrangement could be made.

The idea of leaving 30,000 French soldiers in the English hulks and only exchanging 11,000 could not be entertained for an instant. Humanity and justice were equally opposed to this proceeding; besides, on what lines could any selection be made? The same principle applied to the English allies, who could not remain in our possession if their English comrades were set free.

In accordance with this line of argument, the Emperor wished to reckon the 17,000 Hanoverians, and make up the total of the 43,680 detained Frenchmen by including in the exchange a number of Spaniards and Sicilians.[1] It will be noticed that he persisted in looking on the Hanoverians as if they were actually prisoners in France, and that he was

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 604, fol. 16. Instructions to Moustier, 20th April, 1810.

thus offering to give in exchange men who were not actually in his possession. But on this point Mackenzie had definite instructions. The Hanoverian troops were not to be taken into account, for the conditions of the capitulation, he explained, had not been made known to the men in the ranks, and the King of England had never endorsed the surrender. He denied, moreover, that the Hanoverian troops were serving in English armies; many had deserted, others had taken service in the Westphalian, Prussian, and Dutch armies; the latter had no longer any connection with England; on the contrary they were serving with Napoleon's crowned brothers, and it was quite unjust to look on them as prisoners, especially after an interval of seven years had elapsed.

Yet to satisfy the Emperor, Mackenzie proposed: Firstly, that there should be included in the system of exchange not only the Hanoverians, who were actually in our possession in France and Germany, but also those who had served under England, whose numbers should be based on a report presented by the English Government, *which should pledge its honour to the correctness of the returns.* There were, he said, some two or three thousand who were then serving.

Secondly, that in order to complete the liberation of all the French prisoners who were in England, liberty should be given to all the Spanish, Sicilian, and Portuguese prisoners who were then in our possession.

We cannot but admit that the proposal was humane, for it guaranteed the freedom of every prisoner without exception; from the military standpoint it was advantageous, for even if the number of Spaniards and others whom we were detaining was pretty consider-

able, they hardly possessed the elements of a military training. This was but a small sacrifice in return for the 41,000 trained soldiers, imbued with a hatred of England, whom the Emperor would have recovered within a few days.

As Moustier's instructions did not cover this contingency, he had to refer to Champagny, and the English envoy asked leave to send a boat to England for further instructions. Mackenzie found his position at Morlaix very peculiar. The English Parliamentary vessel on which he had come to France on the 12th of April had been at once sent back to England, and the negotiator found himself a prisoner without means of communicating with his Cabinet. He had real grounds for astonishment and complaint, but no reason to show the anxiety which he did. Moustier appeased him and counselled patience, representing that his arrival had been rather sudden, and that the Emperor was then in Belgium.

These incidents, however, impressed the English agent unfavourably and he looked on them as a bad beginning.

On the following days Moustier discussed at length the question whether the 17,000 Hanoverians were or were not in the English service. The discussion was fruitless, but served to pass the time until Napoleon should send his answer to the proposals made by Mackenzie on the 24th of April.

The two negotiators soon became friends; the English envoy proposed that he and Moustier should have a common mess; Moustier replied that he would do the honours at Morlaix, and that a place would be laid for the English envoy every day at his

table. Mackenzie shared Lord Wellesley's desire for peace, and his hopes that the present preliminaries would soon change into negotiations for peace.[1]

On the 4th of May Napoleon replied from Antwerp to the effect that he agreed to the general exchange, but that as he held 40,000 Spanish prisoners, he could only surrender them on condition that the revolutionary junta of Seville liberated the 10,000 to 12,000 French soldiers who had been made prisoners on Spanish battlefields. But if the junta refused the exchange, he would be forced to keep the Spanish prisoners in confinement. Considering that a general exchange was being contemplated, Napoleon's demands were legitimate, for it was impossible to leave the French prisoners in captivity when the Spanish prisoners were being restored to their country.

Since the close of April, Dickson, Mackenzie's secretary, had left for London to ask for further instructions, and he did not return to Morlaix until the 24th of May. The cause of the delay was, as it would seem, the change which had just occurred in the upper ranks of the Admiralty.

Napoleon's proposals of the 4th of May, with the list of exchanges which accompanied them, were submitted to Mackenzie on the 25th, but could not at once be accepted.

The exchange list included the 12,000 French prisoners in Spain, whose claims had not been considered by England at the outset of the negotiations. Mackenzie was obliged to refer to his Cabinet and send the proposals by his secretary to Lord Wellesley.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 604, fol. 36. Moustier to Champagny, 30th April, 1810.

CHAPTER XXXIV

ENGLISH PROPOSALS. DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISCUSSION

A FEW days later Fouché's disgrace rendered any further attempt at secret negotiations impossible. Napoleon soon repented of the action he had taken, for on the 19th of June he wrote to Moustier to tell Mackenzie that France wanted peace, and that if the discussions at Morlaix resulted in an exchange of prisoners being negotiated, the envoys, to whom the conduct of the exchange was intrusted, would be authorized to initiate negotiations for a maritime peace.[1]

And so, as always, Napoleon, who in the course of his struggle with England kept daily regretting his actions of the day before, began to reproach himself for having brought Fouché's plan to an untimely end, and for having covered Lord Wellesley with ridicule, and he tried to retie the thread which he had himself broken. The long conversations with which the two negotiators whiled away the weariness of their stay in Morlaix gave Mackenzie the chance of enlarging on the peaceful sentiments of Lord Wellesley, and it seemed that in this quarter Napoleon's fresh desire had some chance of being realized. Mackenzie made

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 604, fol. 84. Champagny to Moustier, 9th June, 1810.

no attempt to conceal the pleasure it would be to him to act as England's representative in Paris in the initiation of preliminaries. As a matter of fact he had been appointed by the English Cabinet to pursue the negotiations for peace, which Wellesley hoped might possibly result from the Morlaix negotiations.

On the 22nd of June Mackenzie came to see Moustier in a state of great excitement; he was radiantly happy, for he announced that a reconciliation would take place, for his Cabinet consented to the general exchange of prisoners proposed in Napoleon's provisional cartel of the 4th of May.

The English Cabinet stipulations were as follow:

"(1) All the Spaniards, Portuguese, Sicilians, Hanoverians, and all other subjects, whether in the service of England or of her allies, who are now prisoners in France, Italy, Naples, or in any of the other countries allied to or dependent on France, shall be set at liberty without exception.

"(2) All the French, Italians, and others, whether the subjects of, or in the service of the allied powers of France, now prisoners of war in Great Britain, Spain, Sicily, Portugal, or Brazil, or in any other country allied to Great Britain, or occupied by her troops, shall be set free without exception. English and French troops shall be exchanged, 1,000 at a time, until there are no Englishmen left prisoners in France. As compensation for the 2,000 Hanoverians serving in her armies, England will surrender 2,000 French prisoners quite irrespective of the above mentioned exchange."

This promise was a concession made to satisfy one of the Emperor's demands.

The balance of French prisoners still in England,

in number about 28,000, were to be set at liberty in the following way:

"(1) The 12,000 French prisoners in Spain shall be exchanged with an equal number of Spanish prisoners detained in France, in batches of 1,000 at a time.

"(2) When the second exchange shall have been completed owing to England's good offices with the Spanish Government, England shall surrender to France the surplus of French prisoners, some 28,000 in all, being the balance remaining in their possession. But naturally France, in exchange for the recovery of all prisoners, whether French or allied, shall set at liberty the balance of Portuguese or Spanish prisoners which shall then be in her possession, on receipt of their *parole* not to again take service until they shall have been exchanged with due formalities."

This English proposal was simply the articulate statement of Mackenzie's proposal of the 24th of April previous and would have provided for the general exchange of all prisoners; in a very short time France would have recovered the services of 53,000 trained soldiers and sailors.

But its execution would have meant at the same time an accession of 40,000 troops to Spain and Portugal of a quality very inferior to the French, it is true, but still dangerous in view of the fact that our forces were scattered all over the Peninsular, between Cadiz and Vittoria, in Granada and Catalonia, and throughout the whole of Spain, at a time, too, when Masséna was about to take command of the Portuguese army, which was to drive Lord Wellington out of the country (June, 1810).

Napoleon therefore decided not to accept at once, but to gain a few weeks in the hope that by that time the Portuguese question would be settled in his favour.

Consequently on the 30th of June he sent Moustier orders to propose to Mackenzie that for every 1,000 French troops surrendered, France should release in exchange 250 English prisoners and 750 of the allies. The proposal was an insult, for it affected to look on the English army as inferior to the French, but, besides this, Moustier was to regard the English army which was holding its own under Lord Wellington against Masséna in Portugal, *as actually being prisoners of war.*

One could hardly have believed that even Napoleon would venture to make such arrogant pretensions, were it not that his despatch contained these actual words:

"It is possible that the English may not wish to set free all the French prisoners, fearing the lot of their Portuguese army. You must affect to look on their army as *being actually in our power and you must not show any modesty in advancing this opinion.*[1]

"Moustier will emphasize to Mackenzie 'the utter folly of Wellington's presumption' in trying to hold Portugal with forces which, whatever their numbers, are but a handful compared with the troops which France will lead against them."

The supposition that the English Government was unwilling to set free all the French prisoners in their

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 604, fol. 107. Décrès to Moustier, 30th June, 1810.

power was false, for we have seen in the English proposal of the 22nd of June that they clearly proposed to negotiate a *total* exchange. As for the language which Moustier was to make use of in addressing Mackenzie, it went beyond the limits allowed by civilized nations, especially in the conduct of peaceful negotiations. Never had an enemy's army been considered captive on the day when measures of offence were being initiated against it. The Emperor's present pretensions surpassed all his previous arrogance.

He then laid down a principle, that it was not possible for him to place any confidence in the Spanish juntas, owing to the modifications they were continually experiencing. He therefore declared that he would not enter into a discussion with them, for he felt sure that Spain would never surrender the French prisoners. He proposed to England that she should assemble in the Calais roadstead the 41,000 French prisoners actually in her possession, while France should bring to meet them the 11,000 English who were in confinement, with a sufficient number of Spanish and Portuguese to equalize the numbers; the total number of the prisoners should then be exchanged at Calais, whence British boats should conduct the Spanish where they wished. As after this exchange France would possess a surplus of Spanish and other prisoners, Napoleon would be willing to surrender them in exchange for the 12,000 French prisoners in Spain.

This proposal was self-contradictory. Napoleon stated at the outset that he could not contemplate making an exchange with the Spanish juntas, but a

few lines later consented to make this very arrangement for the French prisoners in Spain.

As if Napoleon's pretensions to consider Wellington's army as already captive were not enough to rouse Mackenzie's resentment, on the 21st of June the *Moniteur* criticised a correct statement made in the *Sun*, referring to the negotiations which were being pursued, as slanderous and absurd. Mackenzie felt that his dignity as a negotiator had been wounded, complained bitterly to Moustier and threatened to leave for England. The Frenchman replied that he would not be hindered in any way from taking his departure.

CHAPTER XXXV

ENGLAND'S CONCESSIONS

THERE was still a hope that the negotiations might prove successful, since there was only a difference of method in the French and English proposals, while they were in agreement about the main object, the complete liberation of all prisoners.

But Napoleon chose this very moment to insert his note in the *Moniteur*, and to make insulting remarks about Wellington's army; he also sent the distinguished English prisoners, who had been permitted to come to the capital, away from Paris to the stations in the east of France; and finally, to crown all, Moustier, by his ill-considered remark very nearly estranged at once the English Cabinet and their representative.

However, Mackenzie's natural good temper soon got the upper hand; his coolness with Moustier did not last long, and to kill time the two organized excursions to the country, picnics, and a number of private entertainments. Several English families had been allowed to take up their residence at Morlaix, and Mackenzie enjoyed their company. Dances were given and the British envoy devoted himself to amusement.[1] He also

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 604, fol. 135. Moustier to Décrès, 27th July, 1810.

discussed the more important provisions on the acceptance of which the exchange of prisoners was to be conditional, and the main principles of which had been agreed on by both Governments, but he did not raise any other questions. Of the general peace he no longer spoke, as he had before; as a matter of fact the British Cabinet were then feeling the full effect of Fouché's negotiations, and the party which was in favour of fighting the differences to a conclusion were laughing Lord Wellesley to scorn for having been duped by the intriguing Minister of Police and by Ouvrard.

The Emperor's proposal to exchange one hundred and ten thousand prisoners[1] collectively in the Calais roadstead was, as we must admit, quite impracticable. It would have been impossible either to accommodate sufficient ships in one and the same roadstead, or to effect the transhipment of so great a number of men; finally, vessels were not forthcoming to transport thirty thousand Spaniards to their own country. If absolutely necessary, arrangements could have been made for crossing the Channel, but not for reaching the Spanish coast, when all the large English vessels were occupied elsewhere. Naturally it was impossible to expect the English Government to keep the Spaniards at home, and incur under this heading an enormous expenditure, to which France would not be making the smallest contribution. The only equitable arrangement possible was that each of the contracting parties should undertake to transport to their respective countries the prisoners who were in their possession.

[1] This was the figure proposed to Mackenzie by Moustier. Alison, *op. cit.*, vol. ix., pp. 680-683, states the question of the prisoners both incompletely and inaccurately.

On the 1st of August an envoy appeared at Morlaix with a long English note, in which all these arguments were unfolded. The British Government again emphatically expressed its desire to secure the freedom of all prisoners without exception, and supported its proposal of the 22nd of June.

There was, however, a most noteworthy provision, wherein the British Government, recognizing the possibility of the Emperor experiencing some difficulty in securing an exchange of prisoners from the Spanish Juntas, proposed an additional clause, couched in the following terms:

"Supposing that the Spanish Government to which the terms of this Convention shall be at once communicated, should not notify its consent within the space of three months, dating from the signature of the aforesaid Convention, such French subjects as shall remain prisoners in Great Britain or in British possessions after the execution of the respective exchange of British and French prisoners, as is set forth elsewhere" [in the Convention of the 22nd June], "*shall be set free without delay or intermission* in successive batches of one thousand, and on the positive engagement, ratified by the French Government, of their not serving in any warlike capacity whatsoever either on land or sea against Great Britain or any of her allies in any part of the world, until such time as they shall have been exchanged with due formalities against such British prisoners as shall in the future, by the chances of war, fall into the hands of France."[1]

The French prisoners were nearly all at Chatham, Plymouth and Portsmouth, that is to say, within easy

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 604, fol. 149.

reach of France; the English prisoners, however, were scattered all over the Empire, and it would have been long before they could have reached Calais, travelling by stages. Estimating the delay at three months, the English Cabinet proposed that during this time the French Government should be sending the Spanish prisoners towards their frontier and that then the exchange with England and with the Spanish Juntas should be executed at the same time.

By accepting the additional clause the Emperor would receive, in the first instance, 11,000 French soldiers, then 2,000 as compensation for the Hanoverians, or 13,000 men in all. Three months later he would recover the remaining 28,000 who, in the worst case, would only be delayed this short time in England. In return for all this he was only to surrender 11,000 Englishmen. It was a magnificent bargain.

Mackenzie supposed, as would anyone else, that this generous English offer, for generous it certainly was, would be at once accepted, and he was considerably surprised at not receiving a reply within twenty-four days of forwarding it. A month passed by; on the 28th of August he told Moustier that it was impossible for him to wait any longer, and, concluding from the Emperor's silence that he refused to accept the additional clause, he asked for his passport. The French negotiator succeeded in persuading him to curb his impatience.

Napoleon's delay was of set purpose; he was impatiently waiting for the news of the capture of Wellington's army by Masséna, just as in 1806 he put off coming to terms with Lauderdale, until the Czar should have ratified d'Oubril's treaty.

To his surprise, and to the surprise of Moustier and the Emperor himself, England consented that the surplus of French prisoners should be surrendered *at once*,[1] without waiting for the conclusion of the negotiations between France and Spain. The need she felt for her 11,000 soldiers must have been very great for her to consent to a bargain so advantageous for us.

And Napoleon did not at once telegraph his acceptance.[2] In his career there are resolutions which amaze us and must remain incomprehensible; this is one of them, and can be compared with his action in the Prague negotiations of 1813.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 604, fol. 182. English note, 22nd September, 1810.

[2] In the Foreign Office Records, Paris, between 1793 and 1840, *circ.*, there are a number of documents marked with a quaint design and labelled "*Dépêches télégraphiques.*" The telegraph, which was a form of semaphore, was invented by the brothers Chappe in 1793, and Paris was connected with all parts of France and the Continent by signalling towers. The system was introduced into England, but owing to unfavourable climatic conditions was much less developed there than abroad. The electric telegraph was invented in 1810 by Ampère, but it was little used until it had been improved by Morse in 1838, when it rapidily supplanted the semaphore.—TR.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE HANOVERIAN QUESTION. THE EMPEROR'S DEMANDS

INSTEAD of formally accepting these terms, Napoleon joined issue on a contemptible quibble which wounded British pride in its most sensitive spot; the question was the Duke of Walmoden's Hanoverian army. It was destined to undermine the building which had been erected with such care.

We have seen that, in the first cartel she had proposed on the 22nd of June, England, in order to satisfy the Emperor, had given her word of honour that 2,000 of the Hanoverians in question were serving in her armies and had offered that the same number of French prisoners should be surrendered as compensation.

Now in his counter proposal of the 28th of August, Napoleon insisted that 8,000 French troops should be given their entire freedom in exchange for that number of Hanoverian soldiers, who, *according to him*, were serving in the English army (Clause 9).

He thus gave the lie direct to Lord Wellesley, who was, in consequence, much annoyed. However, in his note of the 22nd of September, in which, as we have seen, he agreed that the 41,000 French prisoners

should be immediately set at liberty, the British minister offered to give a fresh proof of deference to the Emperor's wishes and count the Hanoverians as 3,000. In presence of this latest proposal, the Emperor instructed Moustier on the 5th of October to inform Mackenzie that he would accept the English offer of at once setting free the 41,000 French prisoners and would surrender in exchange 1,000 English and 2,000 allies for every 3,000 French; that the English envoys would be at liberty to allow the Spaniards to cross over into England or to return to Spain by the Pyrenees; that the expenses of the transport for the latter would be borne by France, but that he must insist on the correctness of his opinion that there were 8,000 Hanoverians serving in the English army, and must claim the unconditional release of an equal number of French prisoners.

It is impossible to understand what was Napoleon's object in insisting on the number of Hanoverians who were to figure on the cartel. The number was no longer of any practical importance. As a matter of fact England was offering to restore all our prisoners without exception, and was thus making an unprofitable exchange. Napoleon was at once to receive 41,000 efficient soldiers and only to surrender 11,000 to the enemy. The exchange with the Spanish prisoners would only be effected at a later date. France could gain nothing by England's admitting a clause in the cartel to the effect that she had some thousands of Hanoverians more or less in her armies, when she had once conceded that some of them were enrolled in violation of the capitulation in 1803.

It is a tempting theory that Napoleon, arguing

from the willingness with which England had accepted all his conditions, began to think that the enemy would reap a greater advantage by recovering their 11,000 men than he would from his 41,000, and that from that moment he abandoned all idea of signing the cartel. It was to him a matter of supreme indifference that there were so many unhappy Frenchmen who had been suffering for a longer or shorter time in the English hulks; consideration of pure strategy moved him far more than feelings of humanity.

The Emperor's reply of the 5th of October, which reached Mackenzie on the 7th, was a terrible blow to him.

"Why!" said he to Moustier, "we are offering to surrender you 41,000 men in exchange for only 11,000, we are in agreement on all material points, and yet, on a question as idle and unimportant as the number of Hanoverians serving in our army, you are trying to pick a quarrel with us, and you wish to force the English Cabinet to give the lie to their own statement! Napoleon's insistence on this point shows that he doubts England's sincerity."

He concluded by imploring Moustier in the name of humanity to suppress the statement about the 8,000 Hanoverians, which the Emperor wished to insert in the cartel. It was of the utmost importance to save the dignity of the British Cabinet; even an enemy's word of honour carried some weight, and besides Parliament and public opinion had to be considered.

Moustier refused, and Mackenzie demanded his passport.

We must admit that the French negotiator did

nothing to tone down the harsh form of his master's notes; he did not attempt to round off the angles, or pave the way to any arrangement. His despatches to Décrès and Champagny give a full account of all his relations with Mackenzie, but there is no sign of any personal considerations, any counsels, or any inducements offered to Napoleon to make him modify his attitude, especially in the Hanoverian question.

Moustier was nothing more than a docile tool, and a very faithful transmitter of Napoleon's wishes; he was himself incapable of inspiring any combination calculated to compromise the question at issue. He was a perfect model of the blind service which Napoleon demanded of his agents, and of which all of them, with the exception of Caulaincourt, were now eager to give proof.

Yet on the 12th of October Napoleon decided for no manifest reason to offer a concession, an inexplicable concession, seeing that the pride of the English ministers made it impossible for them to give the lie to their own statement. He consented that Moustier should lower the number of Hanoverians to 6,000 (instead of the 3,000 proposed by the English), and confirmed his promise that he would be responsible for the transport of the Spanish prisoners until they should reach the port where they were to embark.[1]

This overture was very coldly received by Mackenzie, who replied that the British Cabinet considered it a point of honour to adhere to the statement that there were 3,000 Hanoverians serving in the English army, and not one more.

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 604, fol. 214. Napoleon to Décrès, 12th October, 1810.

On the 20th Napoleon confirmed his letter of the 12th, and added that if in five days the British envoy did not accept the compromise, he should be allowed to depart.

When we consider that the success or failure of the Morlaix preliminaries turned on the question whether the figures 3,000 or 6,000 should be inserted in a protocol, and further realize that it affected in no way the real point at issue in the negotiations, we cannot but conclude that at the end of October Napoleon was no longer willing to treat about an exchange, and that he abandoned his 41,000 soldiers and sailors, and wounded the feelings of the English Cabinet, simply in order to force them to recall Mackenzie.

The events in Portugal give a rational explanation of Napoleon's conduct when judged from his own standpoint. He had just learnt that Masséna had effected an entry into the valley of the Mondego. The news of the capture of Coimbra made the speedy fall of Lisbon highly probable; the English army would be driven into the sea or forced to capitulate. There was therefore nothing to be gained by exchanging prisoners, especially as he was profoundly indifferent to their sufferings. Napoleon could hardly foresee that, on the very day on which he was sending his note to Moustier, Masséna's advance guard was meeting with a repulse in the lines of Torres Vedras. The English Cabinet were better informed, and wished to be in a position to send there the 11,000 men they would at once recover by an exchange of prisoners. That was the reason for their compliance and their readiness to accept the Emperor's

conditions in their note of the 22nd of September, but it in no wise lessens the Emperor's responsibility for the rupture of the Morlaix negotiations, which was, as we have just seen, the direct consequence of his actions.[1]

A painful incident clouded Mackenzie's last few days at Morlaix. On the 18th of October the Central Police Officer forbade him to leave the town. And so, though he had come to France to effect the liberty of the prisoners, he found that he was a prisoner himself. It was suspected that he was taking advantage of his numerous expeditions in the neighbourhood with his English friends to act as a spy and to facilitate the introduction of British contraband. He had even on one occasion mounted the town ramparts. Moustier forwarded these absurd reports to Napoleon. Mackenzie hurried in dismay to see his colleague, and defended himself by saying that want of exercise, his passion for the picturesque, his archæological tastes and the natural curiosity of a man who had spent a large part of his life in travelling had furnished the only reasons why he had left Morlaix. He was much hurt by the suspicion that he was a spy, and declared that he should consider himself as a prisoner and not leave his house. When the five days prescribed by the Emperor had elapsed, Moustier made

[1] In the famous debate in the House of Commons of the 15th of June, 1810, on a vote of credit for the war, in which Canning pronounced his famous speech on Spain, there was no question of the Morlaix negotiations, which had already lasted for nearly two months. Nor when they were broken off did they give rise to any debates. Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates*, vols. xvii. and xviii.

a final attempt to influence Mackenzie about the Hanoverian question. The Englishman proudly replied that "his instructions did not permit of his discussing a point which involved the honour of the British Cabinet."[1]

On the 6th of November he embarked for Plymouth, having been unable to leave earlier owing to the state of the sea.

[1] Cf. Les Cases, *Mémorial*, vol. vii., fol. 39 *sqq*. At Saint Helena Napoleon admitted that the English had finally offered him a general exchange of all prisoners, but that he had refused because he felt persuaded that when the first 11,000 Frenchmen had been exchanged against the same number of Englishmen, the British Cabinet would have raised difficulties which would have prevented the continuation of the exchange. It was a clumsy justification, for England was greatly interested in securing the freedom of the Spanish and Portuguese prisoners in France, who would have been an addition of real value to Wellington's army.

CHAPTER XXXVII

FINAL NEGOTIATIONS, 1812—1813

AFTER having refused to accept the generous offer made by England for the exchange of prisoners, Napoleon felt bound to justify himself to the world, as he had done already in 1806, the day after the failure of the negotiations with Lord Lauderdale. Under his orders d'Hauterive prepared a general account of his attempts to negotiate with British ministers since 1810.[1] The report, which was accompanied by a preamble and followed by documents dealing with the negotiations, appeared in the *Moniteur* of the 15th of December, 1810. We shall not stop to criticise it here, it is incomplete; the documents, whose publication was considered compromising, do not appear. Under these conditions the text is without historic value; it was, besides, only addressed to an indulgent audience of Frenchmen of the time, whom it was easy to satisfy.

We must return to the diplomatic relations with England. It would have seemed probable that, after the complete failure of the Morlaix negotiations, the two belligerents would have long given up all attempts

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 605, fol. 88 *sqq.*

to come to an agreement about the exchange of prisoners.

On the contrary, in pursuance of a letter from Rivière, dated the 27th of June, 1811, received at the Transport Office, which referred to the bad treatment to which our fellow-countrymen were subjected in England, the Court of St. James's volunteered to receive a French agent, charged to verify Rivière's statements, and to look into the conditions obtaining on board the hulks and in the Dartmoor prison, provided that an English agent might go to France for the same purpose, to inspect the fortresses in which the English prisoners were detained.[1]

The proposal, which was clearly inspired by a wish to come to an understanding and to improve the lot of the prisoners, displeased the Emperor. He replied that the only purpose that would be served would be that "we should see with our own eyes, what you yourselves admit, that there are 19,000 Frenchmen crowded together in your roadsteads." And he proposed a general exchange, man for man, including the allies. The English Cabinet were astonished that a mutual sending of envoys should be refused; they thought it useless to entertain the idea of a general exchange for the time being. And so nothing more was done than to exchange a few individual prisoners from time to time.

It is to the honour of the British Parliament that it at that time contained a man of noble character, Lord Holland, who felt that it was a disgrace that so many unfortunate soldiers should be in misery

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 605, 12th March, 1811.

because of the misunderstanding between the two Governments. His friend, Lord Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, shared his feelings. Lord Holland delivered himself to a few friends and especially to Irving, who was a Member of Parliament and who belonged to the Ministerial majority.

On the 18th of December, 1811, Lord Holland raised the question of the exchange of prisoners in the House of Lords, and asked Lord Liverpool, who was a Cabinet Minister, whether there were any negotiations actually in progress, which had this end in view, and if not, whether the Government intended to open fresh negotiations. Lord Liverpool replied that for the moment no such negotiations were being carried on, and that in view of the peculiar position in which the enemy had been for the last six months, it was hardly possible to hope that any such negotiations should be instituted, though the object was eminently desirable.

Just at this time, a Frenchman, des Bassyns de Richement, went to London on private business. Getting into touch with Irving and Lord Holland, he naturally entered into their views, and on returning to Paris towards the close of December, 1811, he communicated the intentions of Lord Holland and his friends to Champagny. At the same time, the Transport Office, under pressure from the English philanthropists, proposed to resume negotiations on the basis which was so advantageous for us, and which was contained in the English note of the 22nd of September, 1810.

But it was just at this moment that Napoleon was putting the final touches to the preparations for his

Russian campaign: he was on the point of leaving Paris with the intention of deciding his differences with England by striking a blow in the North. He attached but slight importance to the fresh English proposals which he attributed to the weakness of the Cabinet.

Des Bassyns soon had to return to England to ask the English Cabinet to give effect to the clause contained in the Ile-de-France capitulation, whereby the inhabitants were allowed to remove the whole of their property without let or hindrance. During the months of July and August he had numerous conferences with Lord Melville, the First Lord of the Admiralty, concerning the exchange of prisoners, and kept the Duke of Bassano [1] fully informed of all the efforts he was making.

On his return to France des Bassyns forwarded him a report, and asked to be sent back to London, duly authorized as Lord Melville had requested. Napoleon was in Russia at the time, and Bassano could not assume the responsibility of making so grave a decision; for every day news was expected of the final destruction of the Russian army. The persistence with which England claimed the exchange of prisoners seemed in the actual circumstances an admission of her fears. So thought the Emperor, and Bassano found his reasoning just.

On his return to Paris in January, 1813, Napoleon, who was now almost without an army, gladly welcomed the English proposals to which he had nine months previously turned a deaf ear.[2] He decided

[1] He had just replaced Champagny in the Foreign Office.

[2] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 605, fol. 261. Bassano to des Bassyns, 21st January, 1813.

that des Bassyns should at once return with full powers to London to treat of the exchange of prisoners on the basis that all prisoners, English, French, and allies, should be set free on the same day.

On reaching London on the 15th of February, the envoy had an excellent reception from Lord Melville, but he at once saw how greatly the failure of the Russian campaign had modified the views of the English Cabinet. It was only to be expected. Wilson Croker, a member of the House of Commons and a secretary to the Admiralty, was appointed to conduct the negotiations with him. They had many interviews; the main issue was often obscured by points of mere detail, and the discussion went to dreary lengths; there were the same difficulties which had been experienced at Morlaix, nothing was done on either side to remove them; des Bassyns was hampered by his far too limited powers; Croker was in a similar position, because the English Cabinet, which had before been so eager to negotiate an exchange, was now so no longer. For the English soldiers in captivity could be replaced by Russians and Prussians.

Besides, it had been agreed that the negotiations should be conducted secretly; but in a country like England it was no easy task to secure this. The newspapers proclaimed them. Des Bassyns showed annoyance, and the English Cabinet took advantage of the fact to break off negotiations. Thus Napoleon paid for the insulting demands he had made in 1810, and for his evasions in 1811. Des Bassyns returned to Paris, and from that moment the exchange of prisoners was no longer discussed.

* * * * * *

Faithful to his system of making an appeal to England whenever he was preparing a great expedition on the Continent, Napoleon had not failed to do so before leaving for Russia. On the 17th of April, 1812, he had written to Castlereagh to propose the following arrangements:

"The integrity of Spain shall be guaranteed.

"The actual dynasty shall be declared independent and Spain shall be ruled by the Cortes.

"The independence and the integrity of Portugal shall also be guaranteed, and the House of Braganza shall sit on the throne.

"The kingdom of Naples shall remain in the possession of the King of Naples; the kingdom of Sicily shall be guaranteed to the Sicilian House.

"Consequently, Spain, Portugal and Sicily shall be evacuated by the French and English troops.

"The other points at issue shall be discussed on this basis; each Power shall keep what the other is unable to take from it."[1]

Such a peace would have been most advantageous to France and England. For England would have kept the command of the sea and all the colonies of which she had possession. France would have been able to keep peace with Russia, and would have retained her supremacy on the Continent.

The reply of the English Cabinet was dictated by public opinion. The papers spread the report that a post had arrived from France; immediately, with incredible sagacity, its contents were guessed, and the Government was urged not to yield on the Spanish

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 604, fol. 192.

question. The successes gained by the allied armies in Spain unhappily justified this language:

"If by the dynasty actually reigning in Spain you refer to the dynasty of Ferdinand VII., we are ready to treat with you; but if we are to admit that the royal authority is to be recognized as residing in the brother of the ruler of France, we must state that considerations of good faith prevent His Royal Highness from entertaining propositions of peace founded on any such basis."

The English reply reached the Emperor at Dresden; on the instant he dictated the draft of a note which he never despatched; then, on further consideration, he drew up another letter, couched in more energetic language, and put off sending it to some later date—from Moscow or St. Petersburg! It closed with this proud declaration: "Though France may have to continue the war for fifty years, no Bourbon shall ever sit on the Spanish throne."[1]

[1] F. O. R., England, Correspondence, vol. 604, fols. 219 and 223.

CONCLUSION

HOW is it possible to explain Napoleon's conduct to England from 1803 to 1813? That he should have deliberately broken the peace of Amiens, as we have shown that he did by the evidence of unimpeachable documents, is intelligible. He wished to be proclaimed Emperor. Having risen through war, he considered that war alone could raise him to the first rank. Yet he might have attained this result by England's moral help, but that was repugnant to his pride. It is less intelligible why, after reaching the throne, he omitted to take advantage of the first opportunity of coming to an agreement with England. In 1806 he could have done so by agreeing to terms which satisfied his every ambition, and he refused! Two years later it was not so easy, for the Spanish question presented difficulties. In 1810 he had another opportunity: when the English Cabinet were more than ever disposed towards peace, Napoleon, by shattering Fouché's plans, made war to the death inevitable. So exasperated was he with England, that he refused to secure the liberty of 41,000 French troops by setting free the 11,000 English soldiers.

Whence came this implacable hatred? At the siege of Toulon Napoleon gained over the English the first

success which established his reputation, though at the same time he received from a British soldier a terrible wound in his thigh which endangered his life. Later on he concluded the peace of Amiens with England and thus crowned his reputation, and yet his hatred for England was insurmountable. Were the attacks of the English pamphleteers responsible for the execration in which he held them?

They were not the cause. Jealousy rather than hatred actuated Napoleon. He wished to dominate the Continent and succeeded; he also wished to rule the seas, but soon perceived that this was impossible, and that, despite all his efforts, the British fleets would always be the finest in the world, and consequently he felt a deep-seated hatred and jealousy of his rival. Napoleon never pardoned England for her command of the sea. Instead of joining England and dividing the world with her, as a real statesman would have endeavoured to do, he preferred to attempt her destruction.

The failure of his preparations for an invasion, and especially his defeat at Trafalgar, were wounds which never healed. Every time that the Emperor was tempted to sign an agreement with England, the bitterness of his mortification made him forbear. Was the peace, which the English so often proposed, ever really desired by him? We believe that we have proved that it was not. His purpose was to humiliate England, and then come to terms; he could never bring himself to treat with her on a basis of equality.

A few remarks let fall at St. Helena give a clue to the real sentiments which actuated Napoleon in his dealings with the British Cabinet; an impartial

examination of State Papers leaves us no room for doubt. Napoleon's jealousy of England was a sign of littleness, for France was sufficiently great on the Continent for England to have retained command of the sea without in any way overshadowing her.

A consideration of the great achievements of Napoleon I., when contrasted with his rude faults in statesmanship, his crimes, his meannesses, and his astounding vacillation, justifies us in thinking that there was a grave want of balance in this powerful organism.

APPENDIX

THE FRENCH REPUBLICAN CALENDAR

IN order to emphasize more completely the break with the past, the National Convention decided on a reformation of the Calendar. Owing to the accidental coincidence of the day on which the Republic was founded and the autumnal equinox on 22nd September, 1792, this date was fixed on as the theoretical beginning of the new era. The system was not, however, actually introduced until 26th November, 1793 (An II).

In ordinary Republican years the year was divided into four quarters or twelve lunar months, each consisting of thirty days. Each month was divided into three decades, the tenth day of each decade being set apart as a day of rest. This left a deficit of five days in the solar year, a defect which was compensated for by the addition of five supplementary days, called *sans-culottides*, at the end of the year. In leap years there were six of these days.

The months are as follows:

22 Sept. to 21 Oct.,	Vendémiaire.	Autumn.
22 Oct. to 20 Nov.,	Brumaire.	
21 Nov. to 20 Dec.,	Frimaire.	
21 Dec. to 19 Jan.,	Nivôse.	Winter.
20 Jan. to 18 Feb.,	Pluvôse.	
19 Feb. to 20 Mar.,	Ventôse.	
21 Mar. to 19 Apr.,	Germinal.	Spring.
20 Apr. to 19 May,	Floréal.	
20 May to 18 June,	Prairial.	

19 June to 18 July,	Messidor.	Summer.
19 July to 17 Aug.,	Thermidor.	
18 Aug. to 16 Sept.,	Fructidor.	

The *sans-culottides* are:

Primidi,	dedicated to	Virtue,	17 Sept.
Duodi,	„	Genius,	18 „
Tridi,	„	Labour,	19 „
Quartidi,	„	Opinion,	20 „
Quintidi,	„	Rewards,	21 „

In Olympic or leap years, a sixth additional day (Sextidi) was to be observed, on which was to be held the "Fête de la Révolution."

The names of the months illustrate a most interesting feature of the French Revolution. The Republican ideal was Roman, even to the merest details of Republican costume, and the small talk of the *salons*, while the literature of the period abounds in classical allusions which recall the more famous period of the Renaissance.

In comparing the Republican with the Gregorian Calendar, the following points should be borne in mind:

(*a*) In 1796 (leap year) the Revolutionary Calendar makes no allowance for 29th February until Sextidi, the last day of the Republican year. Consequently all Revolutionary dates between 28th February and 22nd September must be *reduced by one* before being converted into the Gregorian system.

(*b*) A further difficulty arises from the fact that the year 1800 is not a leap year according to Gregorian reckoning, while An VIII, to which it corresponds, was so considered by the revisers of the Calendar. An IX, therefore, began on 23rd September instead of on 22nd September, and the mistake recurs in each succeeding year. Thus all Revolutionary dates after An IX (Vendémiaire), must be *increased by one*, except only in the next leap year between Ventôse 9

(An XII) and Vendémiaire 1 (An XIII) (28th February-23rd September, 1804), when the two Republican aberrations happen to neutralize each other.

The Gregorian Calendar was reintroduced on the 1st of January, 1806, the Republican Calendar being discontinued on the 10th of Nivôse, An XIV (31st December, 1805).—Tr.

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